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No. 261. SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 1859. PRICE 1½d.

THE NATIONAL CHRISTMAS BILL.

NOTHING is so brilliant or so popular as lavish expenditure; nothing is so mean or so unpopular as the collection of income. The eminent dust-contractor, the repulsive bone-boiler, the extensive rag-merchant, are very different people in the eyes of the world when spending the income which they make, than when making the income which they spend. As is the individual, so is the nation; and the Right Honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer is no exception to the rule.

Figures and financial records are dull things—that has been settled long ago. All aldermen are fat, all misers are lean, all authors are bad men of business, and all statists are heavy—heavy as lead. The national balance-sheet is periodically presented to the averted gaze of a liberal tax-paying public, and consigned to the limbo of unmitigated bores. There is nothing amusing about it; it has not even the merit of full information, it is so wonderfully concentrated and condensed; figured, but not figurative, and dry as the remainder-biscuit after a voyage—the voyage of Vasco de Gama. It is a great bore to the Treasury to have to make it up, and they are determined that the House of Commons shall suffer for its impertinent curiosity. Why cannot money be voted and spent without any record? What is book-keeping?—a thing only known in vulgar trade. What is double entry?—double trouble. Look at Lord Vellum—there is a real gentleman, if you like. Happy the man who has the good-fortune to be *his* steward. 'Spwend what you like,' says his lordship; 'but, for Gawd's sake, don't bother me with these horwid bills!' Noble, aristocratic creature, why cannot the whole country follow his illustrious example? Short reckonings make long friends? Pshaw! A nation of soap-boilers!

There is instinct, if not talent, in these Treasury opinions and policy. Make figures acceptable and popular, make the details of public finance—especially the details of the national income—familiar to every peasant and liberal tax-payer in the land, and money-questions in politics would no longer be the easy butt of ridicule which they are at present. Will this financial millennium ever come? Our national expenditure has increased by an annual twenty millions, compared with the expenditure of twenty years ago. Our great and noble country spends more in government every year than the United States with a greater extent of country, and an equal population; and it is considered a defunct absurdity to inquire why. Let a literary fool rush in where Treasury angels fear to tread, and discourse, like a dull dog, as he is, upon the facts and beauties of the public balance-sheet.

Income and expenditure, then, in round numbers, for the year ending March the thirty-first, Eighteen hundred and fifty-eight, discarding the balances in hand, were each about seventy millions. First, I will take the expenditure, or what the nation spent; as our national, like our individual expenses, are often incurred in advance of our income. I will go to the heroic—the brilliant side of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, before I turn to his mean and repulsive side. I will look at the noble prodigal scattering his money broadcast among a gaping, admiring crowd, before I trace that money to the rifled till of a chandler's shop. We are a great nation, for we govern, or attempt to govern, one-half of the world; we are a wonderful nation, for we tax the child's humming-top for the sinews of our greatness.

Seventy millions being spent, it is required to know how. First comes the interest and management of the National Debt, which reaches nearly twenty-nine millions; then the army and navy charge, amounting to twenty-three millions and a half. This is divided into land-forces, works and stores, and embodied militia—thirteen millions; leaving the difference of ten millions and a half for one year's navy. Thirdly, there is a little group of nearly five millions, which may be labelled as being miscellaneous. The compensation to the King of Denmark for the Sound dues, over one million; the whole produce of the paper-duty swept away at a blow. There is the Persian expedition, which absorbs nearly a million; the expenses of the late war with China, reaching L.591,000; redeemed Exchequer bonds, exactly two millions; and the sinking-fund of the war-loan, one quarter of a million sterling. Fourthly, comes a large group, which ranges itself under the head of Civil Expenditure, swallowing the very considerable sum of thirteen millions and a half. Then we come to another group, headed Law and Justice, which costs the country upwards of three millions. This sum is divided among England, Scotland, and Ireland; the first taking just upon two millions, the second nearly a quarter of a million, and Ireland just over L.900,000.

The next item of expenditure we arrive at is that of Education, Science, and Art, which absorb rather over one million. Then we reach the group of Diplomatic, Colonial, and Consular Services, rather over half a million, one-third, consisting of diplomatic salaries and pensions in most parts of the world, being paid out of the Consolidated Fund. Then we come to Superannuations and Charities, which reach nearly a quarter of a million.

The next group we reach is headed Special and Temporary Objects; they cover a very wide field, and absorb L.600,000. Then we are presented with the Civil List, a sum of nearly L.400,000, appropriated out of the Consolidated Fund, for the consumption of majesty and majesty's household. Next to this item comes the group of Annuities and Pensions, extending to L.300,000 only, but consisting of details somewhat more interesting and unexpected than usual—of annuities to the royal family, pensions for naval and military services, civil services and judicial services, hereditary pensions to the Duke of Marlborough, heirs of the Duke of Schomberg, and moiety of Earl of Bath's pension, servants of George III., and Queens Charlotte and Caroline, pensions formerly on Civil List, trustees of Knipe and Hamilton, and their children; in Ireland, loss of emoluments by the Union, officers of the late Irish Treasury, retired officers of justice, and pensions formerly on Civil List.

The next group of items is headed Interest on Loans, Secret Service, &c., and its total expenditure is nearly L.200,000. There are Interest and Sinking Fund on Greek Loan, the same on Russian-Dutch Loan, commissioners of Greenwich Hospital, Secret Service, formerly charged on Civil List; Receiver-general Duchy of Lancaster, in lieu of prisage and butlerage of wines; Receiver-general Duchy of Cornwall, compensation for loss of duties on the coinage of tin, and compensation for loss of offices in connection with the same. Then comes the Miscellaneous Expenditure, consisting of civil contingencies and the marriage of the Princess Royal, amounting together to nearly L.150,000. The list is concluded with the Expenditure from Crown-lands, which consumes in salaries, allowances, pensions, payments, and office-fees, nearly the same amount as the civil contingencies.

So much for the brilliant, heroic expenditure side of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and now let me turn to the other side—the side which produces the fund that pays for all this diplomacy, liberality, pensioning, and government. There is as much difference between the two as there is between the great dust-contractor riding in state in Rotten Row, and the same dust-contractor sitting in his mean, black, dirty counting-house. Great dukes, lords, and marquises who sit in palaces or mansions, condescending to receive pensions, and nourishing a contempt for the vulgar followers of trade, forget that what they take so hungrily from the national financial caldron has, first of all, been thrown in by tallow, eggs, or cheese. That noble army of young gentlemen, old gentlemen, and gentlemen's gentlemen, who sit all day in government castles of indolence, forget that they are feeding upon those vices of their countrymen—the wholesale consumption of tobacco, brandy, and rum. With a stagnation of trade and an increase of sobriety, away goes the fund which pays a host of salaries that are pensions, and another host of pensions that are not salaries, and never have been.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, leaving the dazzling halls of expenditure, and entering the money-grubbing precincts of the national income-shop, presents the productive public with nine divisions of taxation, from which he collects the necessary sum of nearly seventy millions.

I will first take the Stamps, which produce seven millions and a half. There are the Admiralty stamps, bankers' notes, bills of exchange, cards and dice, Chancery fund, civil bill fund, composition for duties on bills and notes, deeds and other instruments, divorce and matrimonial causes stamps, gold and silver plate, insurance, fire and marine, judgments registry fund, law-fund, legacies and successions, licences and certificates, medicines, newspapers and supplements, penalties and costs recovered, Probate Court stamps, probates of wills and letters of administration, receipts and drafts, and miscellaneous. Next comes the land-tax, which produces nearly two millions upon inhabited houses, and lands and tenements. Then follow the assessed taxes, which produce about one million and a quarter. They are divided into armorial bearings, carriages, dogs, game-duty, hair-powder, horse-dealers, horses, servants, additional 10 per centum, and penalties and cost recovered. The next on my list is the Post-office, which produces three millions. There are postage collected, postage-stamps, commission on money-orders, and miscellaneous receipts. Then come the Crown-lands, which, from rents, sales of old material and timber, and fees, produce about L.400,000. Then there is a group of receipts headed Miscellaneous, producing upwards of one million and a half, and consisting of contribution from East India Company, ditto on offices and pensions, ditto towards merchant seamen's pensions, conscience-money, fees of public officers, income of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin *Gazettes*, king of the Belgian's trustees, savings on grants of parliament and over-issues repaid, superannuation abatements, premium and interest on Exchequer bills sold, small branches of hereditary revenue, unclaimed dividends, various casual receipts, and produce from sales of old naval, military, and civil stores. Then we go to the Property and Income Tax, the backbone of direct taxation, which always produces a million for every penny in the pound imposed. This reaches, in this case, nearly eleven millions and a half. Then we pass to the great group of Excise duties, which produce nearly eighteen millions, by all kinds of annoying, oppressive, and injurious interference with trade. There are hackney-carriages' duty, ditto stage-carriages, game certificates, hops, licences, malt, paper, race-horses, railways, spirits, law-costs recovered, fines and forfeitures, sums received from contributions to late Scotch Excise Corporation Fund, and miscellaneous. Finally, we come to the greatest group of all—the Customs' duties, which produce upwards of twenty-three and a quarter millions, or one-third of the national income. Here it is, in the tariff, that the mean and protective side of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is most clearly seen. The eleven millions of income-tax is produced at a cost of about 2 per centum; the twenty-three millions of customs' duties is subject to a drawback of five times that amount. 'Every tax,' says Adam Smith, 'ought to be so contrived as both to take out and keep out of the pockets of the people as little as possible above what it brings into the public treasury of the state.' 'No,' says the Right Honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer; 'I will rather take my stand upon our great dramatist: "He that is robbed, not knowing what is stolen, let him not know it, and he is not robbed at all."' The income-tax is a bold, open-daylight highwayman, who risks his life fairly for his gain. The customs' duties are midnight, petty thieves, who make up their income, bit by bit, in holes and corners, without risk.

The articles, large and small, which produce income in the British tariff, are four hundred and sixty in number. Twenty-one articles out of these four hundred and sixty produce nearly twenty-two millions and three-quarters sterling of revenue, leaving the small balance of over half a million to be made up by four hundred and thirty-nine articles. I will enumerate this little productive army of twenty-one. Butter brings one hundred thousand pounds; coffee, nearly half a million; corn, meal, and flour the same; currants, nearly a quarter of a million;

pepper, nearly one hundred thousand pounds; raisins, the same; silk-manufactures, nearly a quarter of a million; spirits (rum and brandy), upwards of two millions and a quarter; sugar (unrefined, refined, and molasses), upwards of five millions and a half; tallow, about seventy-six thousand pounds; tea, nearly five millions and a half; tobacco and snuff, over five millions and a quarter; wine, nearly one million and three-quarters; and wood and timber, nearly six hundred thousand pounds. Having disposed of the chief productive articles in the British tariff, many of them—as butter, cheese, corn, meal, flour, silk-manufactures, and timber—suffering under a strictly protective duty; and some—as spirits, wine, tobacco, and snuff—producing revenue based, to some extent, upon national vices—I may glance leisurely over some of the inferior producing articles, and also some of the exemptions.

Almonds, both Jordan and the paste of, are taxed; bitter almonds and aloes are free. Arrow-root, tapioca, and all that family of products, pay fourpence-halfpenny the hundredweight; but arsenic and sanguis draconis are free. The appetite of the infant is fruitful to the public revenue; the Cockney Borgia may work under the licence of free-trade. Figs are a nice and fruitful source of revenue; jalap and castor-oil are nasty, but free. Biscuit and bread are saddled with a duty; caviare and senna are perfectly unfettered. Dates and wine are heavily taxed, but salted cucumbers and logwood extract are totally unburdened. Apples, pears, cherries, plums, boys' marbles, and toys of all kinds, sail in under a duty; but rose-water, tobacco-pipes, and sausages are free. Cries of 'Shame!' from the combined youth of the country against the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Why don't he hit one of his own size?

Malt is absolutely prohibited to be imported—a great boon to the farmers—but juniper-berries, angelica root, and gin materials generally come in without any financial or legal restriction. Manure is perfectly free; soap, plain or scented, and wash-balls, are certainly not. Pickles preserved in vinegar are a source of revenue; vegetables preserved in salt are free. Two anomalies present themselves, alluded to before, in passing: port wine is taxed, but the raw material, according to popular report—logwood extract—is free. Bread is taxed; but the raw material—also according to popular report, potatoes, alum, and plaster-of-Paris—is free. Our French protective blockade is very strong. It taxes lace, silk, wine, clocks, china, with many other articles, even to musical-boxes. In these latter amusing toys, the assessment is very minute and exact. Threepence a tune, played upon a cylinder of four inches in length; but if upwards of four inches, the country wants eightpence. Accompaniments are extra, even to the extent of half-a-crown. Burgundy wine is taxed, Burgundy pitch is free. Out of a list of nearly fifty seeds, only one is taxed, and that is the unfortunate caraway. Turtle is free, but rice is taxed.

The British possessions, in most cases, are allowed to import goods into the mother-country at a considerable reduction of duty, often reaching 50 per centum, if the productions imported are of native growth. Diamonds, lobsters, bullion, and fresh fish of British taking may be landed without report or entry—a privilege accorded to no other goods. Whatever duties there may be amongst the 460 customs' taxed articles, that annoy the young, the old, the feeble, and the strong, it must be a comfort to all to know that one article is gloriously and notoriously free. This is not corn, for that staple necessary of life still pays a juggling duty of one shilling the quarter, equal on the present price to 2½ per cent.—another protective boon still granted to the farmers—it is divi divi.* Like the old woman who, when snatched from a fearful fire, was found hugging something she had saved from the general wreck, which turned out to be a worthless hearth-broom, the British tax-payer, and professed free-trader, amidst the mass of useless, unproductive—when compared with the cost of collection—protective, restrictive, and immoral duties, may congratulate himself that divi divi is free.

The analysis of the British tariff stands thus: It produces one-third of the national income. This third is nearly all collected, from twenty-one articles of general consumption; 439 articles—which, with the twenty-one, make up the 460, the whole number taxed—produce about six hundred thousand pounds, which affords an average of fourteen hundred and thirty pounds each. To pursue the analysis a little further, there are sixty articles that bring less than two hundred pounds each; fifty-three not more than one hundred pounds each; thirty-six not more than twenty pounds each; and thirteen, only five pounds each and under. The persons employed in the collection of excise and customs' duties, on the 1st of January 1857, numbered 5449.

With these facts and figures before him, the intelligent reader may go away a duller, but a wiser man. He will see on one side of the national balance-sheet—the right-hand, or credit side—glory, heroism, and brilliant expenditure; on the other side—the left-hand, or debit side—mean, money-grubbing, and, in some cases, oppressive collection of income. He will find, upon glancing through the British tariff, that notwithstanding our press and platform songs of triumph, we know little more of pure, practical free-trade than Archimedes did of the steam-engine.

POUDRE ROSÉ.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

I.

A DARK wintry day, in the year of grace 1839, was closing upon the final scene of one of those tragedies of real life which would be affecting, were they not, in France at least, of such everyday occurrence. Eugène Beaudésert, the direct representative of a long line of courtiers, warriors, diplomatists, commencing with the Merovingian kings, and now for some time schoolmaster in Lyon, was dying in a mean apartment *au troisième* of a house in an obscure street of that wealthy and splendid city; not, however, of want, of physical destitution, as the wine, cordials, and various tempting delicacies by his bedside, the heaped-up blazing fagots on the hearth, the presence of an unexceptionable nurse, and, above all, of M. Vermont, a physician of eminence, whose minutes were Napoleons, fully testified. Nor, still judging by its surroundings, ought unsatisfied soul-cravings, hunger of the spirit, to have been felt at that death-bed, since two ministers to spiritual needs, one officious, the other official, were in attendance there. The first, a stout, somewhat rustic-looking man, past middle age, at the entrance of the Abbé Morlaix, the famous preacher at the Church of the Assumption, had hastily returned his balm for hurt minds, Plato's *Divine Dialogue*, to his pocket, and shrunk back to a corner of the room where the fire-blaze revealed him with but fitful indistinctness. I, however, from knowing Jules Delpech so well, can easily identify, through the flashing gloom, that large head, fairly developed intellectually, and that face every way ordinary save for a pair of glittering gray eyes; which, from under cover of the pent-house brows, pierce to a very long way off—further, deeper, indeed, than it is desirable to follow, even in imagination. The countenance withal has not what is usually termed a malignant expression. The most timid person, a girl, would hardly be scared at confronting it upon a lonely road in the evening of such another dark day as this; for plainly, vividly, as that unblest, bastard wisdom called cunning, caution, timidity, are written thereon for dullest eyes to read; there is also a certain air of *bonhomie*, assumed it may be—but, if so, habitually assumed—which does much to neutralise the vulpine craftiness of aspect which familiar observers were wont to say faithfully mirrored Jules Delpech's vulpine, crafty soul. A rash judgment, let us hope, in submission to the divine injunction of charity—the charity that thinketh no evil, believeth no evil, with which M. Morlaix, a few minutes since, just before the arrival of the physician, rebuked the moribund's glare of rage, called forth by a somewhat eulogistic allusion to Madame la Baronne de Vautpré; the personage albeit to whom Eugène Beaudésert is indebted for the lay and clerical ministrations which console, or embitter—for there is no interpreting the changeful lights and shadows which flit across that constrainedly calm white face—these last supreme moments of parting life.

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* The pod of the *Cæsalpinia coriaria*, used in tanning and dyeing.

There was no warning of how few those moments were in the suave tones of Dr Vermont as he felt the pulse and looked steadily into the eyes of his patient. He merely observed, addressing the nurse, that M. Beaudésert must be kept as quiet as possible; and then turned away with a slight gesture to the abbé, who followed him to the door, where a few whispered words passed between them. The look and manner of the abbé, as he again turned towards the sick man, revealed, clearly as speech, the significance of those whispered words; and Jules Delpech starting up, hurriedly embraced, and bade his friend adieu, as if for a brief time only, pressed one of the cold hands of a girl sitting by the head of the bed, in both his own, softly suggested hope and courage, and glided from the apartment. The nurse, at a sign from the abbé, did the same, and then the reverend gentleman requested the girl to permit him to speak for a few minutes with her father alone. The answer was an outburst of convulsive grief—passionate exclamations of refusal, which the abbé could only partially calm by consenting that she should remain whilst he administered the last rites of his church to the now avowedly dying sufferer; whose thoughts, whilst fully comprehending, as he seemed to do, the abbé's meaning and purpose, were nevertheless—if one might judge by the feeble demonstrations permitted by his fast-failing strength—with his child, with the earthly future of that young life; and but slightly impressed by the imminence of his own death, and the judgment to follow, announced by the symbolic ceremonial, and the solemn words of the priest.

And now, whilst the abbé is fulfilling his appointed function, I may briefly pass in review the previous and determining incidents of the life-career thus prematurely closing; closing prematurely, there can be no question, as far as life is reckoned by length of days, for it was no longer ago than the autumn of 1803, that the birth of Eugène Beaudésert, the first-born of a distinguished general of that name, and Estelle, his wife, *née* Bresson, a rich heiress of Paris, was celebrated in that city with much pomp and *éclat*. Clouds quickly overgrew and darkened the brilliant future that seemed to await the child. General Beaudésert was killed at Marengo; and his widow, to whom, by the provisions of the ante-nuptial contract, her whole fortune reverted, soon married again, became the mother of a numerous family, and gradually so estranged from her first-born, that after his tenth birthday, she never again beheld him, and died without expressing a wish to do so. It is probable that this unnatural feeling was excited and confirmed by the civilly contemptuous treatment which the plebeian wife of General Beaudésert had met with from her husband's family; one of that section of the Quartier St Germain, which, always with an *arrière-pensée*, capitulated with the Consulate and the Empire for the profitable honours, illegitimate as they might be, and, of course, were, with which it was the weakness of the Man of Destiny to always eagerly reward such condescendence. Madame la Baronne de Vautpré, General Beaudésert's widowed and childless sister, had especially never been at pains to conceal her disdain of her brother's ignoble alliance; and no sooner was it ascertained that *ci-devant* Madame Beaudésert, née Bresson, evinced a decided dislike of her son Eugène, than Madame la Baronne became his active partisan and patroness; and an arrangement was finally come to by which the guardianship of the last male scion of the ancient house of Beaudésert was legally transferred from the *roturier* mother to the aristocratic aunt. Madame de Vautpré discharged her new self-imposed duties, everybody agreed, in the most liberal, exemplary manner. Eugène Beaudésert's education was conducted by the first masters; his purse was supplied without stint or grudge; and he had but just completed his eighteenth year, when Madame la Baronne obtained the high favour and honour of a commission in the *Garde Royale* for her fortunate nephew. But, as most of us know, or have heard, blood is stronger than water, especially that which wells up from the mighty arteries which nourish and sustain the common life of a people; and Eugène's precociously manifested tastes, antipathies, predilections—all clearly traceable to his maternal origin—proved to be diametrically opposed to the tastes, antipathies, predilections of the long line of Beaudésert celebrities dating from the Merovingian kings; not one of whom, that unfilial descendant of a noble race sneeringly remarked, could be justly accused of having stained his scutcheon by doing anything useful or helpful to mankind. As examples of the young man's shocking heterodoxy in matters ancestral and armorial, I may instance his proclaimed opinion, that there were in the world men as capable of governing France as Louis le Désiré—an extravagance which cost him his Garde Royale epaulets; that Napoleon was at least equal as a general to the great Condé; and that to have created 'a connoisseur in dry bones'—otherwise Cuvier the comparative anatomist—a baron, was *not* a detestable desecration by Bonaparte of that order of nobility! That atrocities like these should so frequently sully the lips of her nephew and heir, was naturally a source of disquiet to Madame de Vautpré; but, to do that lady simple justice, she was far too right-minded and sensible a person to take *au sérieux* the froth-follies which flow so copiously from the lips of vain and volatile youth; and she more than once took occasion to observe in his hearing, that so long as her nephew *did* nothing in derogation of his high lineage, whatever he might think or say, would not affect his present or future position as far as she had control over it. Eugène Beaudésert was in his twentieth year, when Madame la Baronne felt or fancied that it might be expedient to at once clearly define *what* it was that to do, or to leave undone, would fatally compromise the young man's future. She did so in the mild impassive manner natural to her, after placing in his hand a draft on Lafitte for the large sum he had just intimated an immediate and pressing occasion for.

'You were conversing for some time, I noticed, at the ball the other evening, with the Count and Mademoiselle de Cevennes; what, frankly now, is your impression, Eugène, of the young lady?'

'My impression of Mademoiselle de Cevennes!

Frankly, then, no impression at all—except, *ma foi*, the vague one of a perfectly well-dressed common-place young person, nowise distinguishable from the crowd of perfectly well-dressed common-place young persons we met there.'

'I have reason to believe,' continued Madame de Vautpré, 'that the proposal of an alliance by marriage of the Beaudésert and Cevennes families would be favourably entertained by Monsieur le Comte de Cevennes.'

'*Plait-il*, madame!' exclaimed the startled nephew, flushing scarlet.

'In other, though scarcely plainer words,' resumed Madame de Vautpré, 'that were Eugène Beaudésert to become a suitor for the hand of Louise de Cevennes, he would not be exposed to the mortification of a refusal.'

'You must be jesting, madame,' rejoined the nephew with some temper. 'What have I done, that it should be proposed to wed me with such an incarnation of ugliness, ill-temper, and Satanic pride, as Mademoiselle de Cevennes?'

'That is your *vague* impression of the lady, is it? It is not a flattering one, at all events; and do not fear, Eugène, that I shall ever urge you to blaspheme the holy sacrament of marriage'—I should here state that it had been for some time whispered in certain circles that Madame la Baronne de Vautpré was growing terribly devout—'by uniting yourself indissolubly with a woman you could not love or esteem; however'——

'*Ma chère tante*,' interrupted Eugène, seizing Madame de Vautpré's hand, and kissing it with fervour—'you are so good.'

'It is well, at the same time, to remind you, Eugène,' continued Madame la Baronne, with her usual calm smile and quiet evenness of voice, 'that I expect from you a similar abnegation of selfish feeling in the affair of marriage—which is to say that you will never think of uniting yourself with a person whom *I* could not love or esteem! Above and before all, Eugène'—and here the speaker's earnestness lent almost tragic force and depth to Madame de Vautpré's mild, steadfast look, and tranquil measured tones—'do not fail to bear constantly in mind that to follow your father's unhappy example, by contracting a *mésalliance*, would be simply and definitively to pronounce irrevocable sentence upon yourself—not merely of immediate separation between you and me, but of the forfeiture of your else assured inheritance of the large possessions, which are, as you are aware, at my absolute disposal.'

'My dear madam,' Eugène managed to enunciate without much stammering, and with an affectation of unconcern with which his changing colour and altogether discomfited aspect did not harmonise, 'you do not imagine, you do not suppose, that I—that you—that'——

'I suppose nothing, imagine nothing, Eugène,' interrupted the stately baronne, locking her *écritoire*, and rising to terminate the interview; 'I merely state as a fact to be carefully borne in mind, that were you so insane as to contract a discreditable marriage—and by discreditable marriage I mean one that I could not sanction—you from that moment would be my nephew in name only, assuredly in nothing more. Do you return to dine? No; well, I shall be sure to meet you at Madame Morny's. Adieu.'

An indifferent passer-by would have been struck by the extreme disquietude evinced by Eugène Beaudésert as he left his aunt's splendid mansion; but in life's careless April-time the clouds pass swiftly; and one little hour had scarcely elapsed since Madame de Vautpré's words had fallen so ominously upon his ear, when they were remembered only as the casual expression of a hasty resolve, which could never be carried out; for was not he, Eugène Beaudésert, the only living being through whom the name, the glory, and the greatness of the Beaudéserts could be preserved, and continued for the admiration and reverence of unborn ages! That great irreversible fact would necessarily outweigh all minor considerations, when poised in so very ancestral a mind as that of Madame de Vautpré, who had, besides, displayed such Christian kindness in relation to that abominable Mademoiselle de Cevennes—the young lady that had graciously, it seemed, intimated—the amiable Gorgon!—that she would not refuse him the blessing of her hand, should he venture to solicit the precious gift. Ugh!

The repulsive idea thus suggested quickly gave place to another and very different one—that of *cette jeune et charmante Adrienne*, whom it would be impossible not to love, were her father, instead of being a *capitaine de dragons en retraite*, a Paris shopkeeper. At that moment, the church-clocks chimed half-past two, reminding the young dreamer that by the time he had reached the jeweller's, and received in exchange for his munificent aunt's draft the superb necklace upon which Adrienne Champfort had set her heart, it would be as much as he could do to reach Clichy by the hour he had appointed to be there. This was decisive; and by three o'clock, Eugène Beaudésert, with the necklace—a trifle, which cost him five thousand francs, no more—safe in his pocket, was rattling gaily along the road leading to the modest dwelling of his beautiful *fiancée*, and then onwards, downwards, to marriage, remorse, ruin, despair—finally, to the dark room *au troisième* in the Rue du Bac, Lyon, where the Abbé Morlaix is even now administering the *viaticum* to the heir of all the Beaudéserts! An old, sad story, of which I need only further give the headings of the chapters intervening between the bridal and the burial.

Madame la Baronne de Vautpré was informed of the marriage of Eugène Beaudésert with Adrienne Champfort by a long and eloquent letter from the bridegroom; to which an immediate answer was returned, enclosing a draft for ten thousand francs, and briefly stating that Madame de Vautpré wished Monsieur and Madame Beaudésert happiness, in the state of life they had chosen for themselves; but, as Monsieur Beaudésert had been timely and emphatically warned would be the case, Madame de Vautpré no longer looked upon that gentleman as her nephew, or as one possessing the slightest further claim upon her.

It was all in vain, as the ten thousand francs, and at last the costly ornaments which he had lavished upon Adrienne, melted away, that the alarmed and anxious husband and father—two daughters, Adrienne and Clarisse, were born to him during the first three years of wedded life—put in practice every expedient, every art he was master of, to change his aunt's inexorable decision; Madame de Vautpré was impassible as marble, and as smooth and polished also; her words and manner, in the personal interviews which her nephew contrived to force upon her, whilst clearly expressive of unswerving resolve, never betraying the slightest irritation or anger.

Thus, step by step, poverty came upon the rash couple; the poverty, armed with serpent stings, that treads upon the heels of reckless self-gratification, and which, but for Captain Champfort's pension—a rather considerable one for his position, he being an inferior member of the Legion of Honour—would soon have been destitution; for Eugène Beaudésert, with all his wordy disdain of birth-privileges, persisted in keeping himself fiercely aloof from the contamination of *useful* employments, and none other were obtainable. And did the blind god that had lured them to such a pass, remain to gild the ruin he had made, to light up with his glowing torch the else drear dwelling where sat Indigence with his black feet upon the cheerless hearth; and Want, ever at the threshold, and waiting but for the death of that white-headed, feeble old man to enter in, deepened the thick gloom with his gaunt forecast shadow? Alas! how could it be so? Was it possible that the enchanting smile with which Adrienne Champfort received the necklace we know of from her delighted lover, should cast its radiance upon the pawn-ticket of that same costly bauble, which her husband, then of some seven sad years' standing, placed in her hand with a sour, fretful caution to put it safely away? The truth was, neither had espoused the intended person. Eugène Beaudésert, Mademoiselle Champfort's idolising admired, was the nephew of Madame de Vautpré, heir to the splendid mansion in the Faubourg St Germain, and the magnificent Château d'Em, near Lyon, of which she had heard so much—a young gentleman, moreover, having free warren of all the jewellers' shops and *modiste* establishments in Paris, the *entrée* of Tuileries balls, and possessed of a thousand other transferable and charming gifts and privileges—surely a very different person from the pale, care-worn, listless man, whose stockings she darned with delicate fingers, at the faintest pressure whereof, in the old fast-fading time, those now downcast unregardful eyes had flashed with rapture! And though still retaining much of her brilliant form and feature-beauty, was Madame Beaudésert, wan wife and mother, eternally busied with household cares, necessarily negligent of the elegances of attire, impatient of the present, regretting the past, the fairy being pictured in the youthful imagination of Eugène Beaudésert as the honoured and admired mistress of his inherited splendours, the grace and genius of the courtly circles to which it would be his chiefest pride to have raised her? Clearly not. Do not suppose that biting, bitter words —hasty and quickly repented of, it may be—such as escaped Adrienne's lips, when, as she was walking with her husband and children in the hot, dusty Champs Elysées, Charles Baudin, the rich grocer's son, whose hand she had refused for that of Madame de Vautpré's nephew, dashed past in his new cabriolet with Madame Baudin, his richly apparelled, very pretty wife by his side—words which ever after rankle in the memory, did not frequently pass between Monsieur and Madame Beaudésert. And yet she was not, as the world goes, an unaffectionate wife and mother, nor he a bad unloving husband and father. Both possessed amiable qualities—amiable qualities, I mean, of an ordinary degree—and we know that none but those supremely angelic unflawed natures, whose only ascertainable dwelling-place, in my experience, is the brains of boys, girls, and authors, can illumine the bleak wastes of life with perennial radiance, make constant sunshine in the shadiest places, sing ceaseless songs of gladness upon empty stomachs, and delightedly disport themselves in the lowest social quagmires, from whatever height thereto hurled down!

To that bright band, Monsieur and Madame Beaudésert assuredly did not belong. They, however, rubbed along disconsolately, till the death, in 1836, of Captain Champfort; when Eugène, roused to spasmodic exertion, left his wife and youngest child Clarisse, at Clichy with the widow, and set out on foot with his daughter, dreamy Adrienne, for the Château d'Em, where Madame de Vautpré had for some years constantly resided, determined upon one more effort—if not to regain her good-will, at least to wrest from her by importunity the means of modest existence. His aunt refused to see him, and returned his letters unopened; wearied out at length, as well as seriously warned by the authorities, that to persist in his annoyance of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré, would bring unpleasant consequences upon himself, he—by the advice of his new friend, Jules Delpech, at whose house, distant about a league from the château, he had taken up his temporary abode—hired an apartment in the Rue du Bac, Lyon; and chiefly in the hope of touching his aunt's heart through her pride, advertised in the local papers that Eugène Beaudésert, ex-captain of the Garde Royale, gave lessons in reading, writing, arithmetic, and elementary mathematics. This notable expedient failed as completely as all previous ones. Madame de Vautpré was immovable by such feeble devices; but a more potent agent than the disinherited descendant of the Beaudéserts was at hand, bringing fullest relief to the sufferer, and rebuke, remorse to his obdurate, pitiless relative. Eugène Beaudésert fell suddenly ill; the long fever of despair had at length consumed the golden oil of life, and the *sœur de charité*, whose mission of mercy took her to that poor abode, saw that yet a few hours and the divine lamp would expire on earth, to be relumed only in His presence whose breath first touched it with celestial fire. Having clearly possessed herself of the melancholy story, sister Agnes lost no time in endeavouring to secure the good offices of the Abbé Morlaix, who, she knew, was the confessor of Madame de Vautpré, reputedly one of the most devout ladies of France. This was not a difficult task; and the abbé, first visiting the moribund, hastened at once to the great lady's presence. Never was the abbé's sonorous eloquence more vigorously exerted; and as he, with the authority of a church of which Madame de Vautpré was a fanatical adherent, entreated, menaced, commanded, her obduracy and pride of heart, insensible to the pleadings of humanity, yielded to religious terrors; before the interview terminated, it was settled that all money could do to avert or delay the stroke of the destroyer was to be essayed; and, that should her nephew not recover, his eldest daughter, Adrienne, was to be received at the Château d'Em, avowedly as Madame de Vautpré's heiress. One condition, however, was peremptorily insisted upon, which was, that Adrienne should be separated from her family, who would be permitted to see her once only in each year; the mother and sister to be paid a yearly pension of four thousand francs during Madame de Vautpré's pleasure, which meant so long as they and Adrienne rigorously complied with the condition of separation from each other. This arrangement Eugène Beaudésert readily though ungraciously acquiesced in—I mean that he neither felt nor affected gratitude for the tardy and fear-extorted concession—and he commanded his reluctant daughter to comply therewith when he was gone, as she valued his blessing and her mother and sister's welfare.

Of that young girl—of Adrienne Beaudésert, whom we just now saw passionately refuse to abandon for a moment the post assigned to her by filial love and duty—I have not as yet spoken, though it is around her the interest of this narrative will mainly gather. It will, however, be only necessary in this place to premise that Adrienne Beaudésert will be thirteen on her next birthday, that she is well formed and tall of her age, and that her now death-pale complexion, eyes swollen and red with weeping, loose untended hair, obscure a beauty as exquisite as that of her mother at the same age; whilst even through that clouding veil of tears and terror, the infantine candour, the faith—how shall I express myself?—the simple trustfulness, verging upon credulity, that marks her character, is strikingly apparent. There are lines, however faint, nascent as yet, indicative of firmness about her sweet, rose-lipped mouth, which cannot be too soon developed and confirmed. That simple, credulous predisposition has unhappily been fostered, exaggerated by the education, if it can be called one, she has received, chiefly from her grandmother; an honest, simple-minded native of Provence, who has peopled the child's mind with the thousand-and-one legends of fairies, demons, witch-charms, potent alike for good and evil, received as gospel-truth in that part of France; and in which her grand-daughter believes as firmly as in the ogre-like instincts of the dreaded relative to whose abhorred companionship or custody her father's last commands have doomed her. Childhood's common dreams, it may be said. Yes, but will they, as such illusions usually do, exhale and pass away in the expanding light of reason, or remain hidden, latent in the mind of Adrienne Beaudésert, till, under stimulating conditions, they start into fatal life and activity? This is the yet unsolved enigma of the story of the Poudre Rosé.

AN EVIL SEEMINGLY WITHOUT A REMEDY.

There is one evil under the sun without a remedy, and that is the power of what is called Fashion over women. In some mysterious way, it comes to be understood that the correct thing for ladies this winter is to carry an amount of inflated dress round the lower part of their persons, which will make them from ten to twelve feet in circumference. Implicitly they submit to have themselves so dressed, as if it were some supernal decree which it was futile to try to resist, let the consequences be never so inconvenient to themselves and the society of which they form a part. The resulting contour of the figure is, in the first place, ridiculous; in the second place, immoral, because false. It involves waste, to the distress of those who have to pay the milliners' bills, and to the offence of God, who tells us that not merely our superfluities, but much of our ordinary means, should be bestowed upon those who want. Finally, it creates danger, for a dress sweeping wide of the person is apt to catch fire, and often does so, with the most tragical effects. Not a month before we write, two daughters of a noble house, had their dresses thus ignited, and, as the arrangement is favourable to combustion, they were so severely burned that they only survived a few days. Yet the inconvenience, the ridiculousness, the immoral falsity, the sinful waste, and the frightful danger, while on all hands acknowledged, are wholly unavailing to abate one inch of the evil. The mysterious decree has gone forth—'we,' say the ladies, 'cannot be singular'—the evil, consequently, great as it is, must be endured.

It is important to observe regarding the subserviency to these mysterious decrees, that there is no progressive improvement. One year, it is one absurdity; another year, another. Balloon-sleeves now—mud-trailing skirts then. Here, invisible bonnets, exposing the head to colds, and the complexion to injury; there, wasp-waists, destroying the play of the organs of circulation and digestion. Always some enormity, and no one better than another, or more partially exemplified. Reasoning on the part of the other sex is wholly in vain to effect any correction—of what use, indeed, is reason, with people who admit the absurdity of their conduct, but say they cannot help it?

Side by side with all this folly, we hear cries from various quarters for the acknowledgment of female equality, and consequent female rights. What an amusing set of enthusiasts! A part is claimed in great and serious affairs for a portion of the community who cannot avoid wearing any ridiculous attire which is proclaimed to be the fashion. A perfect equality with the reasoners is expected for those who confess themselves below the power of reason.

We lately thought of writing a powerful paper on the custom of typifying everything silly and foolish under the phrase 'an old woman.' It seemed to us unfair, on the part of our sex, to pay such court to women while they were young, pleased to listen for hours perhaps to their prattle, professing compliance with their faintest wishes; idolising, deifying them; yet, after all, turning away from them in their maturer years, when, if anything, they had become wiser and more solid. But a little reflection upon the conduct of women in respect to dress has obliged us to give up our intended article. Our design was, we believe, amiable and gallant—for, be it known, we are extremely kind to women, and great favourites with them—but we now see the position was indefensible. Young women, judged by their conduct in this important part of the economy of life, are evidently no better than old women—not a bit more able to resist weak impulses. They may be described as only old women with the gloss of youth in their favour, the latter peculiarity being alone that which brings them the deference which is denied to their seniors. Now, of course, this gloss of youth being a mere external accident, and no proper ground of esteem, whatever it may be of passionate admiration, we must needs admit that the claims of women to respect are equal at all times of their life; and there is no injustice whatever in arraigning them in age for qualities which ought equally to be condemned in them at every period.

No—the proverb must still hold its sway—men of weak tastes and apprehensions must still submit to be called old women, and old women must submit to have such men likened to them—but surely not for ever. There *is* a progress in most things in this fair world; and we may therefore hope that a moiety of the human race—a most interesting one, and invested with great influence, for good or evil, over the other moiety—is not to be left from age to age to doll-dressing, gossip, and the chronicling of small-beer. The brain of woman, though not so powerful as that of man, is composed of the same elements, and equally capable of an indefinite improvement. The occasion which women have for rational accomplishments and skill in serious affairs is, if not so great as that of men, very great nevertheless; why should they not know something of business, and so save themselves from becoming the victims of Western Banks and other traps? Why should they not take an intelligent concern in the making of laws by which they are to be affected as wives and mothers? Why should they not be somewhat informed in physiology and the laws of health, and so save themselves and their offspring from much of what is now suffered in disease, sickly uselessness, and premature death? They have these things in their power, and by such, and the general cultivation of their minds—above all, of their reasoning powers—they might make their young and old days alike respectable, thus extinguishing the ignominy conferred upon them in this proverbial reference to 'old women,' or rather, as we think we have shewn, to women generally. In no other way that we can think of is there to be an end to this imputation on the sex.

It often is impressed on us that the ordinary women of the world lose an immense portion of the happiness placed by Providence in their power, from want of a right apprehension of their capacities, as well as duties. When a lady of the middle rank has an independent provision, or a father or husband to provide for her, she is generally a very idle person. She reads a little in a literature that gives her no intellectual advance; works at some utterly useless texture—a laborious idleness; or plays indifferently on some instrument. All very miserable work indeed. Say she even conducts a household, it is but a poor sole occupation for a human being—one day the same as another—no advance—nothing to look forward to, but the same routine of trivial orderings till the end. When we consider what a wonderful power a healthy brain even in woman really is, and what a potential destiny is connected with it, we might well wonder that such multitudes go on thus for ever, unconscious of what they are failing to do, and what they are failing to enjoy. There is not one of the great class in question but might become something unspeakably superior to what she is as a moral and intellectual being, immensely more useful to herself, her family, and society, and, by consequence, immensely more happy.

The fatality of the case is in the low standard set up for women, by themselves and others. It is understood that they are only fit for trifles and drudgeries, and on the plane of trifles and drudgeries they contentedly remain. The dress-follies are but a part of the system which they are thus made to constitute, and consequently we may expect to see these reign, one after another, until some general change shall take place of the nature indicated.

ELLIS'S VISITS TO MADAGASCAR.*

The Rev. William Ellis, who, a few years ago, became favourably known as the author of *Polynesian Researches*, has just given to the world a work on the island of Madagascar, abounding in matter of extraordinary interest, and which, as a book of travel in an unknown land, must be considered second only in importance to that of Livingstone. Like this last-named personage, Ellis happily unites in himself the missionary, the man of science, and the accurate observer of social phenomena—quite the person, we should think, for spreading with a knowledge of the Gospel the ordinary arrangements of European civilisation. With the view of drawing attention to a volume which might possibly be thought uninteresting to general readers, we shall endeavour to present a sketch of its nature and contents.

The common notion entertained about Madagascar is, that it is a large island in the Indian Ocean inhabited by tribes of ferocious savages, who repel all attempts that may be made to civilise them. The belief that the island is large, and also productive, is of course correct, for it is equal in dimensions to Great Britain and Ireland, and its inhabitants number about three millions. That the people, however, are naturally savage and unimprovable, seems to be the reverse of the truth. In 1817, the country was under the government of a king called Radama, with whom a treaty of alliance was entered into by Sir Robert Farquhar, governor of the Mauritius, on the part of the English government; and forthwith the London Missionary Society despatched not only a body of missionaries, who were well received by the king, but a number of artisans, to impart instruction in the useful arts. Their success was most striking. Having learned the language of the Malagasy, the missionaries arranged a grammar, and prepared elementary books, as well as a translation of the Bible. 'In the space of ten years, after the settlement of the teachers at the capital,' says Mr Ellis, 'not fewer than 10,000 or 15,000 of the natives had learned to read, many of them also to write, and a few had made some slight progress in English; at the same time that a number professed themselves Christians. Within the same period, amongst the 1000 or 1500 youths who had been placed as apprentices under the missionary artisans, some had been taught to work in iron, which abounds in the country; others had been trained to be carpenters, builders, tanners, curriers, shoemakers, &c. These were some of the most satisfactory results of the king's alliance with the English, and the settlement of English missionaries in his country; and although the advantage of a sudden and large increase of firearms amongst a people very partially civilised, may have been questionable, the substitution of legitimate and honourable commerce for the degrading traffic in slaves, the opening of a way for frequent and friendly intercourse with foreigners, the teaching of useful arts, the introduction of letters, with the knowledge of Christianity by which this was followed, will ever cause the treaty between Sir Robert Farquhar and the King Radama to be regarded as one of the most important events in the modern history of Madagascar.' Everything was going on prosperously, when in 1828 the good King Radama died; his nephew, Rakatobe, who succeeded him, was assassinated; and the present queen attained the much-coveted supreme authority. Immediately, the old system of idol-worship was re-established; the profession of Christianity was prohibited; the missionaries ordered off; books were confiscated; and, in short, things put back, as far as possible, to their original condition. But it was beyond the power of the queen to extirpate Christianity utterly, although many unhappy proselytes were put to death; nor could her government make the people unlearn those arts of civilised life which had been so beneficially introduced. There ensued, as may be supposed, a curious condition of society, in which various European usages were blended with the manners and habits of an untutored and superstitious race. We should judge, from Mr Ellis's account of affairs, that long ere this, intercourse with enlightened foreigners would have been resumed but for an unfortunate armed collision in 1845. Some French and English traders who had been suffered to reside at Tamatave, the port which had dealings with the Mauritius, complained to their respective governments that they suffered from the application of certain native laws; two French and one English vessel of war were sent to redress these alleged grievances. Failing to effect an amicable adjustment, they bombarded and burnt the town, and killed a number of the inhabitants. The outrage proved worse than useless. The forces had to retire to their ships, leaving thirteen persons, who were made prisoners and put to death. Since this ill-conceived and ill-conducted affair, the island has been officially shut against foreign residents, although a few, chiefly French creoles, are tolerated at Tamatave.

Besides the elements of social improvement introduced through the missionaries, and which, as has been said, nothing could extirpate, there were other grounds of hope left to those who took an interest in the Malagasy. The natives who remained secretly Christians, and who could write, contrived to keep up a correspondence with their fellow-sufferers who had taken refuge in the Mauritius; and, what was of still greater consequence, the Prince Ramonja, son of the queen's sister, and heir-presumptive to the throne, took to the study of the Bible, gave his adhesion to Christianity, and did what lay in his power to assuage the bitterness of religious persecution. It should be further stated, that the idolatrous and superstitious queen did not proscribe the elegances of life, and she continued to have about her natives of rank, who were able to hold communication in English or French. Understanding that through these several agencies certain political changes were in progress, the London Missionary Society judged it expedient to seek for correct information on the subject, and, early in 1853, Mr Ellis was invited to proceed to Madagascar, to make all suitable inquiries, in company with Mr Cameron, then residing at the Cape of Good Hope.

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* *Three Visits to Madagascar.* By the Rev. W. Ellis. 1 vol. 8vo, with numerous illustrations. Murray, London. 1858.

Having arrived at the Mauritius on their journey of discovery, the two travellers embarked in a small vessel, the *Gregorio*, for Madagascar, but with faint hopes of being allowed to enter the country. Up to this period, all trade with the Mauritius was suspended, greatly to mutual disadvantage. The Mauritius depends for cattle on Madagascar, which, on the other hand, relies on imports for various articles of commerce. After a boisterous and uncomfortable passage from the 11th to the 17th of July, the voyagers arrived at Tamatave, and had some difficulty in being allowed to land. At length the harbour-master, who could speak a little English, took them to his house, 'a well-constructed native dwelling, about forty feet long, and between twenty and thirty feet high, with a door in the centre, and a window on each side, the whole front shaded with a veranda, and the house thatched with the leaves of the traveller's tree.' The house, backed by tall palm-trees, formed, with its inhabitants, a good subject for photography, in which Mr Ellis was such a proficient, that his volume is enriched with a large number of likenesses of public characters, picturesque scenes, and the more remarkable kinds of plants; his accomplishment in this respect making for him friends among all classes. During his brief sojourn at Tamatave, he was gratified with the acquisition of a beautiful aquatic plant, the *Ouvirandra fenestralis*, 'one of the most curious of nature's vegetable productions,' as it is designated by Sir W. J. Hooker. This plant, sometimes called the water-yam or lace-leaf, grows below the surface of the water, and only projects its flower-stalks into the air. The large leaves which float beneath consist of long fibrous veins, between which are rows of open work resembling the finest lace or needle-work. Mr Ellis had the satisfaction of bringing away specimens of this singularly beautiful plant, one of which, we believe, may be seen in the Crystal Palace, and another in the Royal Gardens at Kew.

The application to visit the capital being refused, Mr Ellis and his colleague were obliged to return to the Mauritius, and there make known the fact, that, unless the sum of 15,000 dollars was sent as an indemnity for injuries, the queen of Madagascar would not grant permission for the renewal of trade. The amount being immediately subscribed, Mr Cameron and one of the mercantile class were sent with it, and we learn that a few months later, trade with Madagascar was satisfactorily resumed. This event led to a second attempt on the part of Mr Ellis to reach the ruler of the Malagasy. Again the intrepid missionary, June 1854, embarks with a competent supply of photographic chemicals and medicines packed in his luggage, and gets once more safely to Tamatave. He has hardly time to take up his quarters, when he is called to attend a chief who needs medical assistance, which, by long practice, assisted by common sense, Mr Ellis is able to render with some effect—a conspicuous instance of the value of giving missionaries a certain amount of medical knowledge. The house of the sick chief was a dismal hut, with a fire of wood burning on a raised hearth, edged round with stones, and lighted by a lamp of melted fat stuck on the end of a rod which was fixed in the sand. Other appearances, with appropriate comments, may best be given in our author's own words:

'I found the chief lying on a number of mats spread by the side of the fireplace. His wife was sitting near the doorway, working at a fine kind of mat. One slave was in the outer room, driving away the poultry and pigs as they approached, and another little slave-girl squatting on the ground attended to the fire. The chief said he had removed to this low close hut for the sake of the warmth; the thermometer at that time was generally between 60 degrees and 70 degrees indoors. He was an officer of the government; and while I was talking with him, one of his assistants or aides-de-camp entered with a couple of letters, which, at the chief's request, he read, and which the chief told him he must answer. The young man then went to a box at the side of the room, brought paper, pen, and ink, and seating himself cross-legged on the ground near the lamp, laid a quire of paper on his knee, and having folded a sheet, the chief raised himself upon his mat and dictated, while his secretary wrote a reply. When the letter was finished, the secretary read it aloud, and the chief having approved, the writer brushed the sand adhering to his naked foot with the feathery end of his long pen upon the freshly written sheet, to prevent its blotting, then folded his letter, and departed to despatch it to its destination. There was something singularly novel and suggestive as to the processes by which the civilisation of nations is promoted in the spectacle I had witnessed. Little more than thirty years before, the language of Madagascar was an unwritten language; a native who had been educated at Mauritius was the only writer in the country, and he wrote in a foreign tongue; but now, without any of the appliances which are usually connected with a secretary's desk or office, a quiet, unpretending young man, seated on a mat on the floor in a low dark cottage three hundred miles from the capital of the country, and with his paper on his knee, receives and writes with accuracy and ease the orders or instructions of his superior; and while the latter reclines in his sickness on his mats spread on the floor in his leaf-thatched hut, as his fathers had done for generations before, he has only to utter his wishes or his orders, and these are conveyed to those whom they concern with as much authenticity and correctness as the most formal dispatch from an office of the most civilised nation. And when I reflected that to such an extent had the native government availed itself of the advantages of writing as that in the year 1836, when the late missionaries left the capital, there were four thousand officers employed, who transacted the business of their respective departments by writing, and that such is the benefit or pleasure which the people find in thus communicating with each other, that scarcely a traveller ever journeys from one place to another without being a letter-carrier, I was strongly impressed with the fact that, besides the benefits of their directly religious teaching, missionaries were rendering most important aid towards the enlightenment and civilisation of mankind.'

Permitted to make excursions in the neighbourhood, Mr Ellis prosecuted his inquiries, and was able to improve himself in the language of the country; but he was denied permission to visit the capital, and finally returned to England. At length, the much-desired permission to have an interview with the queen of Madagascar was given. Availing himself of it, Mr Ellis arrived at the island in July 1856, and the account of his more protracted and important visit on this occasion occupies the principal part of the work. The details of his journey to Antananarivo, the capital, which is situated in the interior, and which can be reached only by climbing hills, penetrating trackless forests of gigantic tropical vegetation, fording rivers swarming with alligators, and encountering many other varieties of difficulty and danger—the greater part of the way being performed *à la palanquin*, in a kind of blanket borne by native bearers—form altogether a deeply interesting narrative. We are told that slavery prevails as a legal institution, but the bondage seems to be of a mild type, and the government disallows any export of slaves. Though allied to the Malay race, the people appear to be addicted to peaceful pursuits, and easily assume the habits and manners of Europeans. The mixture of the barbarisms of past times with the practices of modern civilisation, is peculiarly odd; and we can fancy that the general aspect of affairs is pretty much what might have been seen in Britain shortly after the natives had been tinctured with the notions and manners of their Roman invaders. According to the account before us, we should commit a serious mistake in looking on Madagascar as a territory to be taken possession of at the will of any European power. The country is in a state of transition; and nothing can be more obvious than that by the measures of improvement likely to be carried out by the amiable and intelligent prince who succeeds to the supreme authority, Madagascar will at no distant day make a rapid advance, and take a respectable place among Christian nations.

Reaching the capital, and there being lodged in handsome style, Mr Ellis is immediately visited by Prince Ramonja, a young man of colour, but of European cast of features, who speaks English, and is prepossessing in appearance. 'He wore a black dress-coat and pantaloons, gold-embroidered velvet waistcoat, and white cravat. Without formality or reserve, the prince evinced no want of self-respect. He very cordially welcomed me to the country, and in a short time we all seemed to be perfectly at ease. He asked after my home and family; and was much pleased with a picture of my house, and with portraits of some members of my family, which he said the princess his wife would like to see. I told him I had a small present which my wife herself had worked, and which I had thought of offering to the queen or some member of her family. He said the princess his wife would, he was sure, be much pleased with it. He spoke freely of the accounts he had heard of England, and of his esteem for the English; of his high estimate of the conduct of the English on several occasions which had been reported to him; of the character of their laws, especially in relation to human life, which he said they appeared to regard as a most sacred thing, not to be carelessly nor recklessly destroyed. He spoke of the English having often interfered to protect the weak and the injured, and to prevent wrong.' The prince made inquiries respecting the royal family of England, mentioned his earnest wishes to remain on friendly terms with all European powers, and spoke hopefully of the improvement of Madagascar. He stated that an attempt had been made to convert him to Roman Catholicism, but without avail. On subsequent visits, the prince discussed a number of subjects with earnestness and animation; and it need scarcely be added that he and his wife—a lady in the costume of a London drawing-room—were vastly pleased by being photographed in different attitudes.

Passing over the account of numerous ceremonial interviews with chiefs and officers of the court, we arrive at the grand presentation to the queen, who is described as a portly woman of sixty-eight years of age, with an agreeable expression of countenance. She was decked out in a queenly style; and wore a crown made of plates of gold, with an ornament and charm, something like a crocodile's tooth in gold, in the front plate. The interview took place in an open court-yard in front of the palace, a tall barn-like building with a thatched roof and a veranda on two stories all around. The queen sat in state in the upper veranda, environed by her courtiers, while in the open ground below, which was surrounded by soldiers, stood the parties to be received with their interpreters. The ceremony passes off agreeably, and Mr Ellis has the further honour of being invited to dinner, the particulars of which we leave him to describe. 'After ascending by a somewhat steep path to the crest of the hill on which the house stands, we reached the front court, where the queen's band, in scarlet uniform (apparently English) was stationed beneath the veranda. On entering, I was received by a number of servants dressed in a sort of livery, consisting of blue jackets bordered with red. I was politely received by the owner of the house, a number of officers, and other company, amongst whom were M. Laborde, and the Catholic priest with whom I had breakfasted. When dinner was announced, we were shewn to our respective places, which were designated by papers bearing our names placed on the table. Mine was on the left hand of the chief officer, and M. Laborde's was immediately opposite.

'The room was large and lofty, furnished with looking-glasses and other articles of European or Asiatic manufacture, having a large sideboard at one end. The table was splendidly furnished with porcelain vases, filled with artificial flowers, and silver vases the size of wine-coolers along the centre. The covered dishes, spoons, and forks, were all silver; the dishes as well as the vases being of native manufacture, after English patterns, and remarkably well executed. On all these articles, as well as on the handles of the knives, a crown, and a bird, the crest of the Hovas (the royal tribe), were engraved.

'As soon as all were seated, my friend the secretary, who sat next me, intimated in English, that as I was a stranger, and the queen's guest, I should now propose her majesty's health; and on a sign from one of the attendants, the band in the veranda played the Malagasy "God save the Queen."

'The dinner commenced with soup, after which an almost endless variety of viands were served. There must have been upwards of thirty different dishes handed round in succession; beef in every form, poultry, game, made dishes in great variety, with pastry, all exceedingly well cooked, especially the rice and the rolls of bread. There was not much wine on the table, the drinking was very moderate, and there were but few toasts. The utmost propriety characterised the deportment of all present; although there were many of the younger members of the aristocracy at the table, the entertainment was more lively, and much less formal, than some at which I had been present in the country. After the dessert, tea was served in small coffee-cups, perhaps instead of coffee, from the supposed preference of the English for tea.

'After the dinner, the chief officer rose, and delivered a speech expressive of the good feeling and hospitality of the Queen of Madagascar towards the subjects of other governments, strangers from across the sea, visiting her country. This was said in allusion to my presence amongst them; and then, stating that it had been the wish of the queen and the Malagasy government to preserve friendship with all foreign nations, he asked why it was that they were so frequently disturbed by reports that the French were coming to take their country. He said that reports to that effect had been recently brought, and were now in circulation amongst the people; and then appealing to me as recently from Europe, he asked if I knew whether these reports were true, and if so, why was it that the Malagasy were to be attacked.

'Appealed to so directly, I could not decline offering a few words on the subject; and after thanking the queen for the kind attention and hospitality I had experienced, and observing that the cultivation of peaceable and friendly feelings among nations, and the increase of commercial and other intercourse between the people of different countries, was far more conducive to the prosperity of all, than any other course; and that the feelings of good-will towards Madagascar cherished in England had been so fully reciprocated by the consideration and kindness I had received since my arrival, I trusted that corresponding sentiments were cherished by the French.'

The assurances of amity on this and other occasions gave inexpressible satisfaction to the authorities, who seemed very nervous on the subject of invasion. During his residence at the centre of political affairs, Mr Ellis appears to have picked up from conversations with the prince and others, much of the kind of information which was specially the object of his embassy. The leading fact we gather from his statements is, that if Prince Ramonja should ever occupy the throne, the island will be again opened to the missionaries, and go rapidly forward in civilised usages. The prince, unfortunately, has no surviving family, and hence a new element of doubt as to the future. What in the present critical state of matters seems desirable is, that nothing from without should be done to compromise this well-intentioned prince, or bring fresh severities on such natives as privately adhere to Christianity. It need only be added, that Mr Ellis parted with regret from his hospitable entertainers, and having safely reached the coast, sailed for England, where he arrived in March 1857. His volume can be recommended, not less for its valuable information respecting Madagascar, than for various amusing details descriptive of the scenery and social aspects of the Mauritius.

THE SONG OF THE STUDIO.

In a *feu de joie*, all scarlet and purple, the sun smiled a splendid adieu, disbursing gracious vails of gold gleams among the attendant cloudlets as he journeyed away from them to another land. Nature's mantle was decked with her choicest hues, blended and sweetened, as painters say, after her own peculiar manner, the crimson dimming through violet into gray, the orange melting through green into blue.

These firmamental glories could we guess at only, not perceive fully, as we sat in Tim Doolan's studio, which rejoiced in the orthodox north-east aspect; yet by the reciprocal rose-pink blushes of the east, much of the glow and passion of the west could be surmised. Tim Doolan was at his easel, painting with an energy that bordered on the ferocious.

'I never value the light half so much,' he said, 'as when there is not any.' The day was certainly waning, and Tim stood close to his work, as though he were about to dig his head through the canvas.

'It's provoking, it is—growing dark, just as I'm fetching out and finishing.' He was ever a profligate of the day's early hours, and a miser of its last few moments. I may mention that he was called Tim for no other reason that I could ever ascertain than that it was not his name. His godfather and godmother at his baptism had called him 'William,' but the world had chosen despotically to ignore that appellation as inappropriate and absurd, and had somehow substituted the laconic title by which he now went, and to which he answered more readily than to his legitimate prefix. He was Irish, of course. Very spare and very tall, as though nature had had a sort of second thought about his height, and had suddenly added a foot to his stature, without making any corresponding addition to his other proportions. The result was rather a lineal and angular character of figure. He was prone to colour in his dress—affected flame-hued shirts, and grass-green cravats. Add long, tumbled, fawn-coloured hair, ragged amber moustache and eyebrows, pale complexion, Irish nose, and light, wild, blue eyes, and you have a faint sketch of Tim Doolan's general aspect. When painting, he wore a Turkish fez with a long purple tassel, and a puce-coloured shooting-jacket, torn about the pockets, and a good deal slashed under the arms.

There was no affectation of finery about the studio. The walls were of a simple whitewash, not recent in execution. Fugitive sketches in black or red chalk, or in charcoal, were the sole decorations. Interspersed were divers names, initials, and memoranda, addresses of models, recipes for colours and vehicles; also caricatures of Tim in various fanciful situations—painful and otherwise. There was no display of fragments of armour, weapons of war, velvet draperies, and other properties occasionally found in the rooms of painters, more especially those of theoretical rather than practical idiosyncrasy. Tim Doolan did not pretend to be an art Crœsus; or, if he did, the appearance of his studio certainly contradicted him.

I was sitting looking at Tim as he worked. In a dark corner there could just be traced the filmy outline of a pair of boots emerging from a cloud of tobacco-smoke, the only evidence of the presence of another man in the room. He did not speak nor move, this other man; and his feet were at a considerable elevation above the level of his head. The attitude might have been convenient; it was, at least, unconventional.

'Be asy, Miss Bellairs. How am I to put the high-lights into your eyes, if you keep rolling them about like marbles? And, please, don't wag your head like the mandarin in the *tay*-shop! And if you could keep your double set of pearls invisible, it would be convanient, as it isn't the Bull and Mouth I'm painting.'

I have omitted to state, that that distinguished model, Miss Bellairs, was sitting to Tim, and it was to her the above playful admonition was addressed.

'You shouldn't be always eating, Miss Bellairs; sea-goddesses never took dessert; leastways, they didn't crack walnuts with their teeth.' The lady accepted the reproach with a laugh and a toss of her long, undulating hair—a glossy shot-silk of gold and orange-brown.

'Where's my flake-white—was it that I threw at ye for not sitting still? Oh, here you are! Och, how the light's going! It's not safe painting at this time. There—I'll stop. Miss Bellairs, you're a good one to look at, but a bad one to sit still. Can you come to-morrow? Have you change for a sovereign? You'll leave it till the morning? Ten o'clock? All right: good-bye!'

And the light had gone; Miss Bellairs, too, had vanished. There was gloom in the studio—shortly there was growling.

'It's hard times,' says Tim, drawing himself up in a rectangular stretch; 'one paints and paints, and one don't sell, and the money goes out and it don't come in again.'

No one spoke. The boots slightly moved in their circumambient smoke—that was all.

'And what to call this?' and Tim stood fronting his easel. 'Come and help, you fellows. Will it do for Venus, risen from the sea? Euphrosyne is a good name; or Galatea. Wasn't Galatea a sea-nymph? Or shall I stick a chain round her ankle, and call her Andromeda? But then there ought to be a monster; and Jason—wasn't it Jason? or was it David? Who's up in Lempriere? Andromeda has been painted before.'

'I should rather say she had;' the voice came from behind the boots, which waggled derisively.

'A quotation from Kingsley would impart an air of freshness.'

'Pshaw! New wine into old bottles,' from behind the boots.

'What sea-nymph hasn't been painted? Here, Croppie, come out of that—earn your tobacco like a man; give us a name for this?'

Thus addressed, the boots slowly descended to earth, and a head, and ultimately a body, emerged from the smoke. These belonged to the individual addressed as Croppie.

'What do you want?'

And Croppie moved over to the easel. He was not an artist: he was something more formidable—a critic. He wrote on art; not so much essays as manifestoes—bulls, not Hibernian, but pontifical. He was our friend, therefore he did not spare us, for he *rated* more than he valued our productions.

It was said of a certain recent French king, that a pear-shape chalked on the wall was understood by everybody to represent his caricature, and of Croppie may safely be asserted, in like manner, that the drawing of a pair of moustaches merely, would have clearly identified him in the minds of his numerous friends and acquaintances. He was all moustache; his moustache was the first idea you conceived of him, and it was also the last. It was of voluminous character, and to obtain its luxuriance he appeared to have mortgaged deeply, if not sacrificed altogether, his other capillary properties; he was closely shorn, save in regard to the dense line cutting across his face, like an obese equator dividing a pale globe. His hair was kept so short, his head seemed to have been under the mowing-machine, as it was not to be conceived that the hand of tonsurial art could work so evenly; but the moustache was wonderful, a thing to see, and having seen, to swear by afterwards; and then the means of expression to which he converted it—when in wrath how he tugged at its ends, as though they were tavern bell-ropes and the waiter deaf; how he sucked it in, and then puffed it furiously forth again; how he pointed up the ends, and looked the incarnation of remorseless defiance; how he turned them down, and donned an aspect of religious resignation. He was snorting through them, angry at being disturbed, when he came to the easel.

'This is only an old study cooked up,' he said contemptuously.

'It's been kicking about here a long time,' said Tim apologetically. 'I thought I'd finish it, and see what I could do with it. It must have a name—just think of one.'

'This is the way with you fellows;' he turned to Tim and myself, but we could feel that he was addressing not us merely, but a large artist-world without. 'You paint first, and then you think, or ask some one else to think for you; you make the thunder, and then run all over the world to find a flash of lightning to fit it;' and he gnawed at his moustache in a rage.

'The baby generally comes before its name is settled,' I suggested humbly.

'I deny that,' cried Croppie, blowing out his moustache; 'in well-regulated families, the names are provided for a long list of probable children, with a liberal allowance for occasional twins; but art is improvident in everything. For this study—what matters what you call it? Shining white flesh is all very pretty, but I don't know any one that wants to hang up Miss Bellairs, *au naturel*, in his drawing-room.'

'Don't be hard, Croppie; these are bad times. I paint what I think will sell; I am obliged to shake hands with Mammon, for he holds money in his fist after all. I got on pretty well a little while ago. There was a run upon rustics then, and I couldn't paint rural scenes quick enough; now, they 're a drug, and I 've got smockfrocks and ankle-jacks I 'll sell cheap. Pious Sunday-evening pictures were safe things once —venerable parents singing hymns, patting grandchildren's heads, with sunset and church-spire in the distance; but they 've been done to death. Chorister boys, with texts underneath, didn't do badly; chain-mail had its admirers. Horses drinking, I've made money by; and sleeping infants, with gauze angels hovering over them, or orphan-kids in crape weeping over parents' graves; but now, hearts are hardening, pockets are drying up, or something horrid's going on—nobody wants pictures. What does it mane? Is it photography? Is it the war with Ch*ay*na? No buyers—no buyers—that's the song of the studio now!'

Croppie screwed the ends of his moustache into prolonged points. He gazed at us, calmly severe as a schoolmaster, who, eyeing his intended victim, says to him: 'It's much more pain to me to punish than it is to you to suffer. Hold out your hand.'

'There are men in this world,' he said, with the cool keenness of a dissecting-knife—'There are men in this world who call themselves artists when they are simply tradesmen—dealers in colours and canvas. Painters, who should be also plumbers and glaziers. What is pictorial art? Thought in paint, if you like, but not paint merely.'

Tim sat down, and meekly crushed himself into an acute angle.

'Is the artist mind but a parrot intelligence?' went on Croppie didactically. 'No! Why, then, do so many of you paint looking over the shoulders of other men? Why do you elect to study their easels in preference to the eternal picture-gallery of Idea, of Nature, of Life, around you? One man among you lights on the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and you all hasten to smother that minister with paint; one reads *Gil Blas*, and you all read it; one finds the body of Harold, and then you all find it.'

Tim, aghast, fell back, by way of variety, into an obtuse angle.

'Examine the walls of an exhibition; take stock of the *thoughts* there—you 'll not find many. If you can't think, you might observe; but we don't even get honest observation of nature. We get only shams —cosmeticised with prettiness, stuccoed with bad sentiment, to make them, as you think, saleable; or we have the rags and tatters of other men's notions, worn greasy and threadbare, pounded up into pictorial shoddy.'

He thrust his moustache so far into his mouth, I thought he would have choked himself.

Tim was smitten dumb, but not motionless. He whirled up his arms, and converted himself into an accurate representation of a railway semaphore giving the signal 'Danger.' A few moments, and he subsided into 'Proceed with caution.'

'You might make decent house or coach painters some of you; and there's more art in graining a door or picking out the white lines in a gig-wheel than in many of your works; but you 're too vain, too idle, to be honest. You adopt the profession of art as an excuse for vagabondism—to be chartered Bohemians, to live unaccountable lives, wear beards, queer-shaped hats, and be abnormal beings altogether.'

'One must live,' jerked out Tim hoarsely.

'Always the rogue's apology; and putting bad pictures into circulation is a good deal like forging bank-notes.'

Tim bowed his head, straddled out his legs, folded his arms, and became as much like the figure of the fifth proposition in *Euclid* as a diagram could resemble humanity. Croppie was silent. Frowning fiercely in the ambuscade of his moustache, he stood in the attitude of Cromwell dissolving the Long

Parliament—the part of Sir Harry Vane being filled on this occasion by Tim Doolan. The cannonading had ceased. Tim fired a pop-gun.

'You 're an art-critic, Croppie; your bitter-beer has got into your mind. Look here'—he produced a small bit of card—'don't I make sacrifices for the cause of art? This is all left to me of the elegant gold repayter-watch given me at my christening by the O'Donovan—my godfather. That precious piece of furniture is popped, in plain words, for two pounds ten. Respect the unfortunate!'

Croppie was visibly softened. He knew, we both knew, that the elegant gold repayter was a pinchbeck warming-pan that wouldn't go on any terms; but it is in the nature of grief to exaggerate its bereavements—so Tim received our unhalting sympathy.

'I 've had all the hitting to myself,' said Croppie, in a mollified tone. 'Take up the gloves—have a turn at me, one of you. I'm a nice one to talk: look here.' He took sundry bundles of papers from his pockets, and flung them on the floor. 'These are rejected contributions—and these—and these; refused by the *Weekly Crocodile* for not being sufficiently spicy. *Spicy* is the word, as if art-criticism could stoop to the spicy. And here—here is a letter from Burst and Backett: they won't publish my new book, *Art-graphs*, at any price; and—and I think they 're about right!'

He stood in a magic circle of crumpled manuscripts—his moustache seemed to hover above them like a sea-gull over a wreck. It was sublime; it even went further: we warmed, we simmered up into a smile, and at last boiled over into a laugh.

'We 're in the same boat, Tim.'

'And Bad-luck 's the name of her.'

'And yet, I think,' said Croppie, 'if we work honestly, manfully, truthfully, not dallying at the oar, not making-believe to pull, we shall stem the tide against us, reach the shore in safety; and if we don't get rich, Tim, we must balance the pleasures of our professions against their profits. We shall do yet.'

'We 'll get out of other men's ruts, and be shunted off into a line of our own.'

'We 'll stand by each other.'

'Truth and Hard-work for ever,' shouts Tim; 'and now to light the gas. Let 's have a talk, and here 's the Kinahan; and do you take sugar? and fill your pipe. Hot or cold wather? And I 'll sing *Paddy Looney* or *Mick Mulligan's Wake;* and here 's better luck, and many on 'em.'

'The Song of the Studio shall change its tune—there 'll be more buyers than pictures yet,' said Croppie prophetically.

'I hope there may,' cries Tim.

I hoped so too.

A NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

THERE is among a small section of the community an objection to making Christmas Eve a time of rejoicing. That a vast majority of the civilised world are accustomed to do so, is doubtless with the rest a principal reason against it; but there may be also other reasons; for, as genial folks are never in want of an excuse for enjoying themselves, so persons of an opposite character have, upon their parts, blankets ready wetted for every emergency of the breaking-out of a social spark. That man, however, must be strait-laced to suffocation—must have been accustomed to the 'eating of vinegar with a steel fork,' with the worst possible results to his internal system—who has anything to say against the merry doings of New-year's Eve.

If, when the labour of the Day is done, there is always permitted some relaxation to the whole human family—the forty winks after dinner to Paterfamilias, with his feet on the fender and a handkerchief cast over his venerable features; and the half-hour's play with the children to dear mamma, 'between the lights,' when the braiding of Charley's tunic, the embroidery of Lucy's tucker, are put aside for at least one wholesome, loving romp—surely, much more, then, should we all take some ease at the conclusion of the labours of the Year. Then, if ever, in my (maudlin-sentimental?) judgment, should workhouse fires burn cheerily, and workhouse supper-tables groan with meat and beer, and workhouse doors be opened to let miserable street-wanderers in for a glimpse of warmth and comfort, at the end of (it may well be) a whole year's bitter pilgrimage. What a sense of satisfaction would be added to our own enjoyments at such a time, could we feel that every fellow-countryman (and woman) should be certain of at least one good meal that eve—if they could eat it. But even if this could happen, there would be still, as now, a number of persons, of necessity, debarred from anything like social enjoyment. Lighthouse-keepers, railway-guards, doctors in large practice, sorters of the night-mail, and many other exceptional cases, must needs be sacrificed, if the joy of the great majority is to be complete—nay, if their comfort is to be secured. This is an evil which has always been under the sun (and moon), and there is no way, believe me, my Sabbatarian friends, of remedying it. Only let us pity from our hearts, and do what compensating good we can, to persons so unfortunately situated. I would not like, for instance, to be the housekeeper of a lonely mansion, at whatever wages, upon a merry New-year's Eve. That is the point upon which I have kept my eye, my unsophisticated reader, from the very beginning of this paper. It was to introduce that old housekeeper—she was seventy-two, if she was a day—to your notice, that I have been toiling dexterously for these last five-and-twenty minutes. She was not pulled in indecently, and head-first into this narration, you will bear me witness, but led forward delicately by the hand, at the very moment when the audience were about to wonder why, in the name of goodness (or the reverse), the principal person did not make her appearance upon the stage. And this is how *I* first made the dear old gentlewoman's acquaintance.

In the middle of last summer I arrived at a certain village in the north, much celebrated for its beauty, with the intention of taking lodgings there for my wife and family, who—since the place was generally crowded—were to follow me. It was quite full on this occasion, and likely to be so for a month to come. The hotels were so crammed that many of their private rooms had to be made public; and the lodging-houses in such demand that many of their inmates sat with their heads out of window all day long, on account of there not being any room for them inside; or, it might be, only to obtain a better view of the surrounding scenery, which, in truth, was exquisitely beautiful. Vast hills, made sombre by the pines, which, sentinel-like, stood up on the summits against the clear blue sky, surrounded all the scene except to southward; where a fertile plain went broadening down with 'crowded farms and lessening towers, to mingle with the bounding main.' A swift but shallow river ran through the village, with a bridge of stone, on which, if it was idleness to linger, hour after hour, and catch the changing face of that fair landscape, there were a good many idle people in the place beside myself. Still, as neither of its two dry arches were to be thought of as lodgings for my wife and family, it was necessary that I should quit

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that position, and look for accommodation somewhere else. The long white street which made up the little hamlet, it was useless to investigate. The shortest and sparest bachelor employed in a search after a vacant apartment, would not have had the ghost of a chance of finding it; while a domestic person of my girth and length of leg, upon such an errand, would have absolutely exposed himself to public ridicule. In this strait there was nothing for it but to apply to the postmistress, who was likewise the chemist, the librarian, the purveyor of bear's grease to the royal family, and the wine and beer merchant, and who, of course, must needs know everything.

'The house-agent informs me,' said I, 'that there isn't a room to be got to swing a cat in anywhere; now, my dear good woman, do tell me that this isn't true.'

'Do you *want* to swing a cat, sir?' responded the little lady demurely, whom I at once perceived to be that monstrosity, a female humorist, in addition to her various other professions. I laughed my very best at her, for she was my last hope, and my politeness was fittingly rewarded. Yes; there *was* a house, three-quarters of a mile down the river, then to let; and there was a white mark on the low wall opposite the place, so that I might know exactly where to look for it.

'But is it so *very* small, then, that one might pass it without seeing it?' inquired I, a good deal disconcerted.

'It is quite big enough to swing a'——

'Woman,' cried I, interrupting her in her egotistical chuckle, 'be silent; it is one of the miserable habits of your sex to repeat again and again any remark which you have the misfortune to consider good.'

The little postmistress, who was the autocrat of the village, and unaccustomed to reproof, slammed her little gate behind me, so that the shop-bell which hung to it rang quite a peal of indignation; and I flatter myself that I sent her to her medical department for a glass of ether—or sal-volatile at the very least.

If it had not been for the white mark upon the low wall opposite, I should have missed the house I was in search of to a certainty. It was so enveloped and shut in upon all sides by trees, that there was no getting a glimpse at it from the highway at all; there was no road leading to it, but only a steep flight of steps and a winding path; then a pretty little lawn, which, however, the sun's rays could not reach, except at the precise point where a cracked stone-dial stood, and then another steep flight of steps to the front-door. The house would have been a handsome one but for the air of desolation rather than decay which clung to it. There was a veranda over the two front sitting-rooms, wherefrom the miserable creepers were hanging like determined suicides, and darkening the low-roofed chambers with their weird shadows. All within was clean and orderly, and the ancient furniture well kept and well looking, though it had evidently been long disused. The bedrooms were few but capacious, with enormous cupboards in them, and the most curious and inconvenient angles, wherein nothing could be stowed away but walking-sticks and umbrellas. This old-fashioned appearance within, and the air of melancholy without, were the only objections to the house. It was 'lonesome,' explained the old housekeeper, as the reason of its not being let, and I quite agreed with her. I would much rather have agreed with than differed from her, upon that or any other subject. I never saw such determination, such grave purpose, such undeniable resolve, before, in any mortal female. I should have liked to have shut her up alone with that humorous postmistress for twenty-four hours, and have had my choice for a good big bet as to which would have eaten the other at the end of them. I took the house at once for the shortest term at which she would let me have it, which, I am thankful to say, was only some six weeks longer than I had intended our visit to be. I think if she had insisted upon my buying it, I should then and there have paid her the money down, such an air she had of not being trifled with upon any pretence. When matters were arranged, she led me out into the shrubbery, which surrounded the dwelling in a mysterious and labyrinthine manner, and into the long-grassed desolate orchard which lay at its back. The pine-crested hills could be indistinctly seen through its wilderness of trees, and the noise of the rapid waters dimly heard. It was a very beautiful spot for all its 'lonesomeness,' and as cheap as romantic.

'I wonder,' mused I, half to myself, 'that any difficulty should have been found in letting it.'

'I always let it, over and over again,' answered the old housekeeper, startling me with her melancholy tone, 'but the folks never come after all.'

'Ah, they don't like to refuse you, my good lady,' said I comfortingly; and, indeed, I could not blame them for their want of firmness.

I, however, returned, for my part, with my wife and family, and spent some very pleasant months in the house with that dear old soul. You will have misjudged her, reader, cruelly, as I did, if you think her anything else but an honest, brave-hearted, grand old woman. During all her lonely residence in that desolate spot—and she lived quite alone in it—she had never been frightened; and only once felt at all 'uncomfortable like;' that once was last New-year's Eve.

She had gone into the village to make merry on that evening with some relatives of hers; and on her return to the desolate dark walks and lawn, the scene, contrasting itself with that festive one which she had just left, did seem to her unusually comfortless and eerie. The strong iron shutters with which the house was plentifully provided were, however, firmly fastened, for she tried them all outside; and the key of the door she had in her pocket. Once inside, therefore, it was clear she had nothing to fear except from her imagination. She got inside, and fastened the door behind her; but even then could not shake off that uneasy sensation, which she was so unaccustomed to and ashamed of. The long rope of the alarm-bell hung down as usual, through the two stories to the hall-floor itself, quite ready to her hand, and, she confesses, she had at least half a mind to ring it.

But she passed up the two flights of stairs and into her bedroom, with as firm a step, or nearly so, as on other occasions. Once there, however, she did a very unusual thing indeed. Having locked and bolted her door, she placed in front of the keyhole, and about her candlestick, a heap of shawls and cloaks, so that no light should be visible either through window, shutter, or door. And thus she waited for the approach of the thief, *whose feet she had seen under the curtains of the great hall-window as she came in.* She watched from half-past ten till nearly twelve (and we question whether that New-year's Eve was being spent by any elsewhere under such exciting circumstances); till at last 'my gentleman'—she always called him so in her narration—came up, as she had expected, and tried her door. Finding that fastened, he stooped down and looked through the keyhole, and listened with great attention. He heard the old lady breathing very stertorously, after the manner of an old lady who had supped heavily, and was suffering for it in her sleep; and he saw no light. Next he struck a match; and she, observing to herself that one light would do for both of them, then extinguished her candle. Cautiously letting herself out, she followed the robber down the stairs to the front-door. He opened it, stood on the topmost of the steep stone steps with his flaring light, and whistled once, twice, thrice. At the third whistle, the old housekeeper crept up to him, and, to use her own expression, 'tipped my gentleman down them steps like a sack;' after which, not trusting to the lock which had already proved so faithless, she very swiftly bolted and barred the door. She did not think it was worth while to ring the alarm-bell, as the foes were now all outside, and she had the greatest confidence in the strength of the house-fastenings; but she sat up in the hall for the rest of the night. The old housekeeper owns to this much only of alarm, that it was rather a 'grewsome' way of seeing an old year out and a new year in; and I, as usual, quite agree with her.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

RAILWAY IMPROVEMENTS.

There appears to be a growing notion that railway directors are far from shewing an alacrity in adopting improvements in the mechanism of transit; as, for example, the forms of the carriages, and arrangements connected with them, remain as they were at the outset of the railway system. The complaint is, that directors do not look abroad to see what is done elsewhere—that they persistingly go on in the old way, seemingly unconscious that they are in a world of general advancement. As far as we can judge, the cause of this alleged torpor is the financial difficulties into which nearly all railway companies have got, as well as the constant expenditure of time in projects of rival extension. The development of traffic, by holding out particular inducements to travel, is about the last thing thought of; just as if a shopkeeper were to occupy himself incessantly about his accounts and finances, instead of planning how he could, by keeping a proper stock of wares, tempt people to come and buy from him.

Public convenience is felt not to be consulted in various ways. Not to speak of occasionally harsh regulations respecting return-tickets, there appears to be a defect in confining the sale of all kinds of tickets to the space of a few minutes at an over-crowded and small wicket. Why not allow the public to buy parcels of tickets, to be used according to convenience? The extent to which the price of fares might be reduced on groups of tickets, we leave to be determined by circumstances; at the same time, we feel assured that, if some inducement of this kind was held out, many more tickets might be sold. At present, certain persons buy season-tickets, which enable them to travel to and fro daily; but numerous individuals do not want to travel daily; they wish only to travel twice in the week; yet, except in very special cases, tickets are not sold for this latter purpose. In the case of families in the country who wish to invite friends, parcels of transferable tickets would be particularly convenient; nor do we see why railway tickets might not be given as prizes, and distributed in many other ways advantageous to all parties concerned.

Besides complaints as to the want of smoking-carriages, such as are common in Germany, there is much dissatisfaction on the ground of there being no accommodation for sleeping. In Canada, and also in the state of New York, provision has been made for sleeping in a lying posture in the railway carriages, and the system works satisfactorily. In the Canadian Great Western line, the cars, which are more open than ours, are divided longitudinally, by a partition, so as to leave a passage along each side. Sleeping-berths, like those in a ship, are arranged tier above tier in each of these compartments; one side being for ladies, the other for gentlemen—the partition forming a proper line of separation. From the following account of a correspondent in a New York newspaper, dated Buffalo, November 8, 1858, it will be seen that the same ingenious plan of sleeping-berths for night-travel has been realised:

'I do not know that I can give you a clearer notion of the estimation in which the new feature just introduced into the appointments of the New York Central, in the form of a "sleeping-car," is held by travellers, than to mention two or three facts that came under my observation in passing over the road from Albany to this place, night before last. There is usually a light train, Saturday night, particularly in the 11.45 run, for the reason that passengers bound west are constrained to lie over at Buffalo or the Falls until Monday, no trains running on either side of the lake on Sunday; and they contrive to start at such a time as to reach their point of destination by the end of the week; and the six o'clock train takes nearly all the way travel. So, as I said, the New York express train, which leaves Albany at 11.45, usually carries comparatively few passengers. I came up on that train Saturday night. It consisted of four passenger-cars—the sleeping-car and three of the company's ordinary coaches. The number of passengers, exclusive of employés of the road, when we left Albany, was sixty-eight, of which thirty-seven had berths in the sleeping-car, and thirty-one were distributed through the company's cars. Three or four of the sleepers got off at different points, and their places in the car were supplied by accessions at other points; so that we came into Rochester with about our original number—exceeding, all the way through, the aggregate of passengers in the other cars. The passengers spoke in terms of warm approbation of the conveniences and comforts afforded by the newly invented car, and the opinion was freely expressed that night-travel on rail, instead of a thing to be dreaded, was really more agreeable than travel by day. We arrived at Rochester about seven in the morning, where we stopped to breakfast. On our return to the sleeping-car, we found that the attentive conductor had transformed our couches into the most commodious and luxurious seats I ever saw on a railway. You will not care for a detailed description of the sleeping-car. It is enough to say that it is very strongly constructed, and tastefully fitted up with every convenience for a night's ride, each passenger being furnished with a comfortable berth, a pillow, and a blanket; that everything is neat and tidy, and must be kept so if the enterprise is to succeed.'

AN ADDITIONAL WORD ON THE SEEMINGLY REMEDILESS EVIL.

Really, Paterfamilias must see to it. Every day, the newspapers bring us suggestions against the dangers which the young ladies are incurring through their inflated dresses. One speaks of guards on all fires; another recommends a previous dipping of the expanded dresses in a weak solution of zinc, by way of rendering them *less* inflammable. A clergyman warns his female hearers that the seats in his chapel are calculated each for a certain number of moderately dressed people, and if the full number come, they must be accommodated, howsoever particular ladies may be squeezed for it. But worse than all this, the 'Unconfined'—that direly dangerous sort of people—have caught up the case, and 'gone off' upon it.

We must infer that such is the fact from the results of a trial lately concluded at Liverpool. Two ladies of that city, who, though both under fourteen, have already got themselves invested in steel-hooped dresses, walked out on the Princes' Road, with their governess, Miss Marsh, on the 1st of November last, between one and two o'clock, when a man assailed one with a knife, with which he attempted to cut her dress, exclaiming: 'These ropes, these ropes, these ropes—I must cut them!' He was beaten off; and the ladies, three days after, were led to the belief that their assailant was a young man of most respectable position and character, named Mr John Huntingdon, whom they accordingly caused to be taken up, consigned to a jail, and in due time tried for the alleged offence. Owing to the general interest in the case, it was necessary to conduct it in St George's Hall, one of the largest, and perhaps the most beautiful in Europe. There, before the gaze of four thousand people, was exhibited the mutilated dress, 'reduced to something like the shape and dimensions of a stick of celery'—so great a deception it was. The attempt to identify this respectable young man as the culprit completely and disgracefully broke down; and such was the public sense of the hardship to which he had been subjected, that the crowd drew his carriage along the streets in triumph. This memorable trial has of course an interest of its own, both in respect of accusers and accused, as well as for their townsfolk in general; but it is nothing to us beyond what it leads us to infer as to the actual, though unknown offender. We can entertain not the least doubt that he must be a member of the class just designated—that great class of people who have morbid tendencies, but are not insane enough to require being locked up. There is a constant quantity of such everywhere, and we always see that their predisposed minds fasten upon anything which is much spoken of, or adverted to frequently in the newspapers. When we consider the emotions of disgust and contempt which these shameful dresses are calculated to excite even in sober and sound minds, we need not wonder much that an excitable one should be impelled to fall upon an example with a knife, and madly try to redress outraged propriety. This, of course, is a kind of action which cannot be unattended with danger, not to speak of the unpleasant consequences which may follow from the very notoriety incurred by the victim. We would therefore have Paterfamilias to look to it. It is a matter trivial in itself; but if we are right in our deduction, he will see that it may not be trivial in its results.

GOOD WATER COME—BAD WATER GO.

The town of Ely, although in an unfavourably low situation, has benefited in a remarkable manner from going under the Public Health Act in 1851. The chief improvements effected were an introduction of good water, and the establishment of drains to carry off refuse. The average annual mortality during seven years before these changes, was 26 in 1000 inhabitants. In seven subsequent years it was 19 per 1000 (in the last two years, only 17). It is also stated that there has been a special improvement of health to the young—a matter of immense consequence to the future welfare of the community. It is not alone by the rate of mortality of ordinary times that we must measure the benefits of sanitary measures. The place in which, as in Ely, putrid matters are banished, becomes the less liable to pestilences. This has been shewn by a report of Dr Acland, of Oxford, on a typhoid fever which occurred last year at the village of Great Horwood, containing a population of 704. One hundred persons were attacked, and 18 died; and the cause was clearly traceable to overcrowded dwellings, cesspools, and want of ventilation. These, the *Times* remarks, 'constitute a laboratory of pestilence which the beauties of nature, woods and pastures, brooks and flowers, can adorn, but not counteract.'

AFTER THE BATTLE.

The drums are all muffled; the bugles are still;
There's a pause in the valley—a halt on the hill;
And the bearers of standards swerve back with a thrill
 Where sheaves of the dead bar the way;
For a great field is reaped, heaven's garners to fill,
 And stern Death holds his harvest to-day.

There's a voice on the winds like a spirit's low cry—
'Tis the muster-roll sounding—and who shall reply?
Not those whose wan faces glare white to the sky,
 With eyes fixed so steadfast and dimly,
As they wait that last trump which they may not defy,
 Whose hands clutch the sword-hilt so grimly.

The brave heads, late lifted, are solemnly bowed,
And the riderless chargers stand quivering and cowed,
As the burial requiem is chanted aloud,
 The groans of the death-stricken drowning;
While Victory looks on, like a queen, pale and proud,
 Who awaits till the morrow her crowning.

There is no mocking blazon, as clay sinks to clay;
The vain pomps of the peace-time are all swept away
In the terrible face of the dread battle-day:
 Nor coffins nor shroudings are here;
Only relics that lay where the thickest the fray—
 A rent casque and a headless spear.

Far away, tramp on tramp, peals the march of the foe
Like a storm-wave's retreating—spent, fitful, and slow,
With sounds like their spirits that faint as they go
 By yon red-flowing river, whose waters
Shall darken with sorrow the land where they flow
 To the eyes of her desolate daughters.

They are fled—they are gone; but oh, not as they came,
In the pride of those numbers they staked on the game.
Never more shall they stand in the vanguard of Fame,
 Never lift the stained sword which they drew;
Never more shall they boast of a glorious name,
 Never march with the leal and the true.

Where the wreck of our legions lay stranded and lorn,
They stole on our ranks in the mists of the morn.
Like the giant's of Gaza, their strength it was shorn
 Ere those mists had rolled up to the sky:
From the flash of our steel a new daybreak seemed born
 As we sprang up—to conquer or die.

The tumult is silenced; the death-lots are cast;
And the heroes of battle are slumbering their last.
Do ye dream of yon Pale Form that rode on the blast?
 Would ye face it once more, O ye brave?
Yes! the broad road to Honour is red where ye passed,
 And of Glory ye asked but—a grave!

E. L. H.

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FLORA'S KALEIDOSCOPE.

However excellent and edifying the pursuit of botany may be as a science, I have always been inclined to regard it with a modification of that mental shrinking which induces me to decline the study of anatomy. For great botanists, I entertain a profound respect; I bow to the dim shade of Theophrastus; I kiss the feet of Tournefort and Jussieu; I propitiate the learned ghost of Linnæus; Ray and Zobel have my blessing; but amateur flower-killers are my aversion, and I pass a petty experimentalist and his tin box with an instinctive and inevitable shudder, mildly suggestive of Burke and the Inquisition. I do not profess to know the Latin name of a single flower; I cannot tell the difference between an exogen and an endogen; I regard a lily with feelings which I cannot concede to a bamboo-cane or a bunch of asparagus; I gather my snow-drops and hepaticas without counting their stamens; I feed my canary with plantain and chickweed without thinking of 'cylindrical spikes' and pentandria; *spores* and *panicles*, and *peduncles* and *bracts*, are to me an unknown tongue; I admire my lichens and mosses without remembering that they are only *Cryptogamia;* I will not be told that my daisies are *Syngenesia*, nor have my butter-cups defined as *Thalamifloral exogens;* I cannot for the life of me tear a rose or a strawberry blossom to pieces, in order to resolve it into its first principles, or to enlighten myself as to its primeval atoms. All this painful and beneficent vegetable surgery I thankfully leave to the botanical demonstrator, taking his erudite dexterity for granted, but keeping my kaleidoscope out of his way, to shew me Chaucer lying among the daisies, or Cowper and Beau hunting for water-lilies, or Shakspeare standing in the March wind looking at the daffodils, and dreaming of the swallows. 'It is my faith that every flower enjoys the air it breathes;' and in the annual miracle of flowers, I see set forth in most vivid allegory a dream of hope to man. It pleases me to walk in 'God Almighty's garden,' and to yield myself to the sweet irresistible mournfulness with which they bind themselves to the living, dying heart, that can claim at least the brotherhood of origin with these lovely children of the dust. I like to puzzle out their legends, to read their voiceless symbols, to talk with the flowers that are sown by the winds or the angels, watered by the showers, fed by the sunbeams, and cradled by the lulling night. Never, to the most attentive and beseeching eye, do they present or reproduce a reiteration of themselves, or of one another, however perfect the old model, however faultless the desired grouping. Flora's light-pictures are never repeated; her kaleidoscope is always turning. To lay aside that technical 'language of flowers' which has only been brought to a climax in the fragrant east, is not the whole earth, under their countenance, still 'of one language and one speech?' To the child, they are the elves of 'life's fairy-time;' he looks for fays under the lady-fern, sees their rubies in the golden cowslip-cups, holds sacred the strawberry flower, listens for the peal of the swinging harebells; he gathers them, crushes them as playthings in his rude hands, loves them, wearies of them, throws them away. Flowers are the universal moralists; not one but has its lesson, its sermon, or its song. Roses and lilies, in wise hands and at sacred feet, have formed the texts for holiest themes, for deepest parable and tenderest morality. Faith and duty, and love and hope, and peace and gladness, smile on their dewy faces; fading in quiet hands, they speak of death; creeping over low green graves, they whisper of immortality. They are the emblems alike of feasting and mourning, of speech and silence, of sorrow and hope, of grief and love. They have mingled largely in the pious superstitions of all nations; and, indeed, without a figure, they might be called the divinities of natural religion. Sacrifices were dressed in flowers, temples adorned with them, the dead fondly strewed with their sympathetic blossoms; the gods of springs and running waters were propitiated with their fragrant incense; and of these *Fontinalia*, a curious relic may still be found in Derbyshire and some of the midland English counties, where the pretty custom of 'well-dressing' is retained by the flower-loving peasantry. Nor is divination by means of flowers altogether extinct in the southern villages, where they are even yet invited to employ their harmless witchery in disclosing intricate and important love-secrets. With death, a universal instinct appears to associate them. The ancient Jews were buried in gardens. Poor Shelley passionately desired to lie among the flowers—as passionately as the milkmaid who wished to die in spring, that she might have a store of them stuck on her winding-sheet. Sir William Temple, a florist of a very different order, though his bones were laid elsewhere, had his heart buried among his Dutch flowers. The symbolism which made the beautiful rose an emblem of silence, consecrated it in a peculiar manner to the sad hush of death; and thus, while in one chamber, it was twined with myrtle at a festive entertainment, in the next it might be shedding its dying sweetness on the withered lips of a corpse.

Flower-worship, if we except the sublime and almost spiritual religion of the Magians, embodies the least questionable, or, at all events, the most innocuous system of idolatry. Who can wonder, for instance, that the imaginative Egyptian bowed to the imperial lotus, as she slept and waked upon his floating rice-fields, heaving and sinking with the rising and setting sun, as if she were indeed the *hlæfdie*, the bread-giver? Her white bud, close folded, dreaming on the dreaming water, men fancied the wave-rocked egg of the fabled halcyon. Even the stagnant Celestials opened their dull eyes to worship her azure beauty, and the dull Japanese throned their stupid idols on her dense massy leaves of waxen green. In the dark ages of the Christian Church, the monks found a practical problem for their ingenuity, in the economy which yielded to their skilful hands, at will, harmless medicaments and deadly poisons. They invented a *clock* of flowers, and discovered or imagined the most wonderful devices emblazoned on their tiny hatchments. Not satisfied with these minor undertakings, they at length achieved a complete floral directory, which assigned to each flower a particular day in the year to blossom, and a special saint for a tutelary genius. Of the three hundred and sixty-five worthies thus selected for honour, some, of course, are very whimsical, and some extremely dubious; yet the thing is in itself a curiosity, and some of the adaptations are not without poetry, significance, and humour. Thus, to the Virgin they dedicated the drooping snow-drop and the immaculate lily; to St Barnabas, the sunflower; and to the first martyr of Christianity, the deep purple heath; the hyacinth and wild harebell were assigned to St George, as the champion of merry England and 'blue-haired Ocean;' Leo the Great had to put up with the dandelion; while St Dunstan presided over the helmet-like cowl of the deadly monkshood; to St Augustine was intrusted the flushing rhododendron; while the sweet-scented stock blossomed under the eyes of his gentle mother; sweet-william, of course, has its own godfather; the sensitive plant is for St Vitus; blue bells for St Dominic; and so on, *ad infinitum.*

Nor are historical associations wanting. In ancient times, the river Arno was emblematically represented by the figure of an aged man, guarded by a lion that grasped a red lily in its dexter paw. If this is the species known in this country as Turk's cap, Leigh Hunt, an authority in such matters, assigns to it a yet more ancient and more honourable niche in the classic temple, as the veritable hyacinth, due to that unlucky game at quoits in which Apollo terminated for ever his Spartan pupil's gymnastic exploits; for it carries still its crimson ensign, and on its blood-sprinkled lips may still be traced the old Greek dirge-like '*Ai, ai!*' This fancy recalls a whimsical middle-age miracle, registered in that repertory of monkish fable, *The Golden Legend.* A knight more noble than witty, and more valiant than wise, betook himself, about the meridian of life, to a holy abbey, where he might repent of his sins and learn his alphabet. But in spite of the most strenuous efforts of his saintly pedagogues, no result of any kind could be achieved upon this dull-brained antique, except the stereotyped vocables, Ave Maria, which lesson he dinned, in motonous perfection, into the ears of the whole monastery, until he died. No sooner was he laid in silence under the sod, than a majestic *fleur de lis* sprang from his grave; and upon every petal there gleamed and glittered in letters of gold the everlasting 'Ave Maria.' Stirred by a praiseworthy curiosity, the monks determined to dig to the root of this mystery, which they found, *literally*, in the mouth of the knightly dunce, who was thus empowered to rebuke the secret exultation with which the holy clerks had sung *Requiescat in pace.*

The etymology of Syria is traced by some to a rose of peculiar fragrance called *suri.* The emblem rose of England gave its name to her longest and bloodiest civil feud. White roses climbing up old walls in Scotland speak faintly of Katherine Gordon. The brakes of broom in March glitter with the name of Plantagenet. The French lilies, once quartered with our lions, recall sundry passages, grave and glad, in our national story. And in their own land, while they droop among the Bourbon banners, sweet violets creep to the feet of dead Napoleon. Strangest pseudonyme for that captive eagle, soaring from Elba with his broken chain—*Père la Violette.* And France has other floral memories. The golden violet, prize of the troubadours, brings to mind the old May-games of Toulouse, and their reputed foundress, Clemence Isaure. Her image stood over an old gateway there for centuries, perhaps it still remains; but the marble flowers are broken from the marble hands, and the inscriptive legend can no longer be deciphered upon the brazen tablet over which time has breathed so rudely. Something of melancholy, as usual, hides in the shadow of the old romance which faintly keeps her name. Her triplet of emblem-flowers, the violet, eglantine, and marigold, blossomed in gold and silver on the breasts of successive minnesingers for five hundred years or so, till the crimson tide of the Revolution washed that too into the land of fable.

Before passing into the immediate presence of the Juno of floral mythology, Leigh Hunt must turn the kaleidoscope. It is not easy to resist the joyous chorus which he puts into the lips of the flowers:

The dear lumpish baby, humming with the May-bee,
Hails us with his bright stare, stumbling through the grass;
The honey-dropping moon, on a night in June,
Kisses our pale pathway leaves, that felt the bridegroom pass.
Age, the withered clinger, on us mutely gazes,
And wraps the thought of his last bed in his childhood's daisies.

See—and scorn all duller taste—how heaven loves colour;
How great Nature clearly joys in red and green;
What sweet thoughts she thinks of violets and pinks,
And a thousand flushing hues, made solely to be seen;
See her whitest lilies chill the silver showers,
And what a red mouth is her rose, the woman of the flowers.

To the classic symbolism of the rose, we have already alluded. Cupid, say the fables, conveyed this tempting bribe to Harpocrates, on the part of his mother Venus, and thus secured the reticence of the silent god, while he provided an allusive emblem which is still perpetuated among ourselves—though our white and crimson roses, as certain of our old poets assure us, sprang from the blood of Adonis and the tears of the mother of love. The Jews, casting their eyes over the sweet rose-valleys of Palestine, accept a less pagan legend. The rose, they say, had slumbered in the lost Paradise—till a young maiden, wrongfully accused of some heinous crime, was condemned to a death of fire. But the fatal torch, as it touched the pile, burst out into blossoming roses; and the holy child was borne home in triumph, with this verdict of acquittal round her innocent head. This universal queen extends her sceptre from Iceland to the wall of China; from the sunny cradle of the Pierian sisters to the chilly Lapland homes, where, for a few brief days of sudden summer, the streams are 'fringed with roses.' But it is in Persia that she achieves her greatest triumph; there, in a perfect wilderness of sweets, the fire-worshippers hold their feast of roses, to the music of the faithful nightingales, who pour their floods of song from real rose-trees, crimsoned with dewy blossoms, to twice the height of a man. The Hakims of Arabia well knew the value of this crimson rose; while Egyptian pharmacy distilled from its snowy twin, that fragrant water, and the yet more precious ottar which is the quintessence of its sweetness. Stealing westward, is the wild yellow rose of the Levant; its more hardy sister of Italy and France; and the beautiful Austrian, folding its golden petals round a scarlet heart. Many of these strangers have been naturalised with us, in addition to our own endless varieties. While the parent Eve, mother of thousands, the sweet wilding of our summer hedges, climbs with swift feet and rosy fingers beside our beaten ways, sheds honey for the bee, rocks the gray nest of the chaffinch, opens her heart to the butterfly, feeds the little rose-beetle on her sunny lips, and gives to that tiny upholsterer, the carpenter-bee, the deftly fashioned curtains of his curious home. Nor does she lack her poets. Spenser kneels to this Faëry Queen; Beaumont and Fletcher wave their hands to her; Shakspeare chides and caresses her at will; Fanshawe moralises to her; Herrick brings his epigram, and Raleigh his legend; Milton sees her thornless in her native Eden, and calls her to strew the hearse of his Lycidas. And without passing over the debatable ground of more modern poesy, old Gawin Douglas shall tell us, in his quaint, fresh vernacular, how Scotch roses budded in the fifteenth century:

> The rose-knobbis tetand forth their head,
> Gan chip, and kyth [shew] their vernal lippis red,
> Crisp scarlet leaves sheddand, baith at anes,
> Cast fragrant smell amid from golden grains.

Not less idolised, perhaps even worshipped in a more human way, is that little English amaranth, the daisy. It is impossible to quote at large, but equally impossible to refrain from looking at Chaucer on his knees in the dewy grass, breathing orisons to the 'iye of daie:'

> And doune on knees anon right I me sette,
> And as I could, this fresh floure I grette,
> Kneeling alway, till it unclosed was,
> Upon the smale, softe, swete grass;
> And leaning on my elbow and my side,
> The longe day I shope me to abide,
> For nothing else, and I shall not lie,
> But for to looke upon the daisie,
> That well by reason men it calle may
> The daisie, or else the iye of the daie—
> Whan that the sunne out of the south gan west,
> And that this floure gan close and gan to rest,
> For darkness of the night, the which she dred,
> Home to mine house full swiftly I me sped,
> To goue to rest, and early for to rise,
> To seene this floure to sprede, as I devise.

The dear old man! let us hope that he had his 'daisies white and red' to 'sleep and wake upon his senseless grave.' Margaret of Hungary is said to have given this little pearl its French name, and another Margaret, queen of Navarre, and grandmother of the Great Henry, chose it for her emblem, and under its auspices, called her own selection of pious and contemplative poesy by a title which was capable of rather a multiplied significance, '*Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses.*' Among the older poets, Gawin Douglas was not so taken up with his primroses and violets, his silver-headed lilies, and his 'green-bloomed strawberry leaves,' but what he gave the first place to the 'daisie, unbraiding her crownal small.' Shakspeare's eyes were never made to pass them on the April grass. Ben Jonson, so literal in his floral nomenclature, that he talks of the 'lips of cows,' is sure to have a corner for the 'bright day's eyes.' Herrick, a very Quixote, must chide them for their early hours; but the rosy lashes of the child-like sleepers close at sundown, in spite of Julia. Among the moderns, there is much of love and worship; but only Wordsworth can take his master's place as high-priest of the daisy:

> Thee, Winter, in the garland wears
> That thinly decks his few gray hairs;
> Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
>   That she may sun thee;
> Whole summer fields are thine by right,
> And autumn, melancholy wight,
> Doth in thy crimson head delight
>   When rains are on thee.

Sitting upon the 'dappled turf,' he wearies art and nature for similes for his darling; she is a lark, a star, a nun, an apostle; a queen with a ruby crown, a little one-eyed Cyclops, 'a silver shield with boss of gold,' to cover a fairy in fight. Walking in the grassy lanes, the daisies meet him like troops of morris-dancers; dreaming over his favourite brother's grave, they seem to him 'a starry multitude.' And what can be prettier or more suggestive than this poet-lesson to a child?

> The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
> Protects the lingering dew-drop from the sun.

Dr Good and James Montgomery might both be cited here; and who forgets the gowans of *Auld Lang Syne*, or the little martyr of Mossgiel? Shelley, always dreaming of flowers, has set *his* daisies in a carcanet too fragile and too lovely to be broken:

> There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
> Daisies, those pearled Arcturi of the earth,
> The constellated flower that never sets;
> Faint ox-lips; tender blue-bells, at whose birth
> The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
> Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
> When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

The innocent daisies might have had their rivals, if Chaucer had ever seen the snow-drops clustered white and glistering on the cold February grass—the only creatures pure enough to lay their heads on the new-fallen snow, where their soft petals of frosted alabaster droop over an inner circlet of faint, sweet green. The poetical superstition of the Romish Church went not so far astray when it set them, like the doves of the purification, in the hands of the worshipping Virgin.

'*Majnycklw!*' cry the cold Swedes, when the first primrose (key of May) unlocks the jewel-house of spring, and holds up its soft lips, wet with the melting snow, that is chased by the swift flowers over the face of the stubborn rocks. And we, in our more gradual year, know that there is but a step between the primrose and the violet, that is even now opening its purple eyes under the dead brown leaves. Some old divine talks of the 'primrose-way to the everlasting bonfire;' but we would rather listen to Herrick's music, who must be forgiven his absurd nonsense about the violets for the sake of his tender, childlike primroses, and the yet more sweetly serious pathos of his 'faire daffodills.' But no one must steal the violets from Shakspeare. 'Violets dim,' says Perdita, 'far sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes.' (And if it is true that Venus purpled their stainless leaves with the ichor of her celestial foot, no wonder). The exquisite opening of *Twelfth Night* seems but a whispered note of preparation for the approaching heroine, the faint, sweet, stealing shadow of Viola herself. When poor Io, say the fables, was wandering disconsolate in the disguise of a heifer, Jupiter, thinking no existent vegetable sufficiently fragrant or delicate for her food, created violets for her delectation. This perhaps was the reason why Venus, according to Herrick, 'beat them black and blue.' No such legend, however, can attach to the stainless lilies of the valley,

> Shading, like detected light,
> Their little green-tipped lamps of white,

as they pass, like the wise virgins, round the entire circle of the earth, wreathing the very poles in their fearless and saintly beauty.

The ground is hardly broken; we cannot crush the flower-stars into this glass of ours. The ethereal Shelley must hold it for one moment before we lay it down. Look here!

> The snow-drop, and then the violet,
> Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
> And their breath was mixed with fresh odour, sent
> From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.
> Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,
> And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
> Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
> Till they die of their own dear loveliness;
> And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
> Whom youth makes so fair, and passion so pale,
> That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
> Through their pavilions of tender green;
> And the hyacinth purple, and white and blue,
> Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew,
> Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
> It was felt like an odour within the sense.
> Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
> And starry river-birds glimmered by;
> And the sinuous paths of lawn and of moss,
> Which led through the garden along and across,
> Were all paved with daisies and delicate bells,
> As fair as the fabulous asphodels,
> And flowerets which drooping as day drooped too,
> Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,
> To roof the glow-worm from the evening dew.

My kaleidoscope is broken; the spirit of the frost struck its crystal too roughly with his wing of adamant, and shivered away its jewelled atoms. 'O golden, golden summer, what is it thou hast done?' The pure sad snow-drops, like the angels of children, have gone back to heaven: the fragile mosaic of the primroses is trampled under foot; the hawthorn, thick with snowy blossom, no longer trails its boughs in the sunlight; the fern droops sere and shrivelled, mourning for the foxglove's purple bells; the blue eyes of the speedwell are closed in death; the bees hum no more in the creamy tufts of meadow-sweet; the forget-me-nots have dropped their golden lamps into the stream; the fairy-fires are quenched; the water-lilies dream under the dark-waved lake; the red flags of the poppies are trodden into the dust, where the crocus sleeps in mail of gold; the blue gentianella lies under the cold iceberg; the narcissus has wept itself to death; the glossy periwinkle has hidden her blue and silver stars, and the slender fingers of the jessamine cling flowerless to the chilly wall; the pansies, floating after poor Ophelia, have withered on Milton's grave; the delicate convolvulus has closed her fragile cup, and the winds have caught away the anemone, their pale devotee. The aureola of the marigold has faded; scarlet lychnis has blown out his 'burning shining light;' the daffodils have 'prayed,' and departed; the passion-flower has laid down her cross; the lilies have gone into the marriage. The flowers are dead and buried; the wind has chanted them to sleep, and is shaking over them, with viewless hands, his funeral sod of leaves. Yet I found a primrose, looking out with pale eyes from the dank moss at the foot of a beech-tree, this morning, and through its chilly tears it seemed to smile, and sing up to the wild wind its low 'Resurgam.'

A STORY OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY.

Some months ago—to follow in a condensed form the narrative lately given in an American newspaper—there was living, no matter where, a negro woman, some fifty years of age, named Katy. She had been married according to the religious code of the south, by a ceremony which pledged the twain to each other 'during their lives, unless otherwise unavoidably separated.' Katy was an active, well-principled woman, and lived happily with her husband, until his death. This took place from a severe flogging which he received in consequence of having resented some gross indignities shewn towards his wife. Beaten till he was insensible, and pitched into his hut, he died in a few hours—literally whipped to death. Though this was years ago, yet Katy even now weeps like a child when repeating the details of the outrage.

This murder, as it must be called, though taken no notice of as such, left Katy a widow with two children, both girls, of ten and twelve years old. It also raised up in her a determined resolution to break away and be free, and hereupon the latent energy of her nature came into powerful action. She knew that money was indispensable, so she worked, and toiled between tasks that her virtuous resistance caused her master to increase in severity, and by trafficking with the negroes around, accumulated a small sum. But it took twenty years to do so! During this long night of darkness she had no human sympathy but her own unshaken determination to be free. Meanwhile, her two girls, grown large enough to be profitable as breeders, had been married to fellow-slaves on the same plantation. Each had now three children. Katy saw with grief these new impediments to liberty springing up around her, but without the power to prevent it. She felt that she could easily provide for her own safety in flight, but was resolved to leave neither child nor grandchild in bondage. She saw, too, that these incumbrances were increasing in number, that her master was becoming embarrassed in his finances, and that some of them must be sold to relieve him. It might be her own offspring who would thus be taken. While they were united was therefore the time for them to fly. The flight agreed upon, preparation was made, and a night selected. They knew that dogs might be put on their trail. To prevent their feet depositing a scent which the dogs would recognise and follow, they filled their shoes with a preparation which effectually throws them off. What this preparation is, it is not necessary to name. It is hard for a plantation-slave to obtain it, not because of its cost, but because his isolation shuts him out from intercourse with the civilisation where only it abounds. A knowledge of its virtues is part of the occult knowledge of the plantation. All proper preparations being made, and the hour of departure almost come, one of Katy's daughters suddenly gave out. She had always been fearful of failure, and now her courage gave way. She refused to go. In this unexpected dilemma, the heroic mother was calm and resolute, and allowed of no derangement in her plans. Her mind had evidently come to some unexplained conclusion. An hour before midnight, the whole party, one daughter alone excepted, took up their dangerous march.

I cannot undertake to give a tithe of the particulars of the perilous journey thus begun. But its incidents were most painful and exciting, while at times they were sadly discouraging. There were six young children to provide for—some to carry, some even to nurse, and all to be prevented from crying or complaining aloud. Then food must be provided, for the stock they started with was soon exhausted. By daylight they concealed themselves in swamps or thickets, sometimes lying a whole day in the water. By night they travelled, slowly, because they must move silently and with extreme caution. Twice they heard the distant baying of dogs, but not their master's, though they were evidently in chase of other runaways. Once, when but indifferently concealed within a swamp, rendered nearly dry by a long drought, they could distinctly hear the tramping of horsemen and their shouts to each other. These, so far as they knew, were all the perils they encountered. They may have been surrounded by dangers, but were unconscious of them. As they shunned the public roads, even in the darkest nights, it may be supposed their clothes were soon worn to tatters by the thickets of briers through which their straightforward journey led them. The north star was their only guide. Wherever that stood, they hurried onward, for they had always heard that beneath it there was no slavery. The six children were terrible clogs to their progress; but their fathers were strong men, with singularly patient dispositions. The heroine of this expedition never faltered for a moment. Once fairly clear from her master's plantation, her courage rose into assurance of success, and she performed prodigies of endurance. She forded creeks with a heavy child on her shoulder, and swam broad rivers, supporting with one hand the same laborious burden. Her mind was so intensely excited that she slept but little, and ate even less. Every faculty was strung to its highest tension. As she was the leader of the troop into the wilderness, so she was the life and soul of it through all its tortuous wanderings.

How long they starved and shivered on this journey, Katy is unable to tell; she thinks it must have been four weeks. At the end of that period, as near as can be judged, and some three hours after nightfall, while quietly tramping over a ploughed field, they were brought suddenly to a halt by a high and substantially built fence. While examining how it was best to be got over, the figure of a man unexpectedly revealed itself to them. He had been standing against the fence when they came up—had heard and seen them, but they had not seen him. Fear took possession of them for the moment, and they huddled round poor Katy. The young children also began to cry. No wonder; it was the first white man they had seen since they fled from their master. 'Who are you?' the man shouted. But the fugitives made no reply. One of them, dropping a child from his shoulders, and passing over to his wife, put himself in a posture for defence, with a short, heavy club, which he quickly drew from the belt by which it was suspended behind him. The stranger again called out: 'Are you looking for friends?' To this Katy quickly answered: 'Oh! yes, master, for God's sake, help us!' Instantly he opened the door of a dark lantern which he carried in his hand, and the full flash from a brilliant burner fell directly on the fugitives. Dazzled by the glare, they covered their eyes, and while thus half-blinded by the sudden illumination, he came close up to them. He comprehended the case in an instant. 'Be quiet, and don't be afraid,' he said; 'you are now among friends, and I will take care of you. Come with me.' The fugitives were in Pennsylvania! They had struck the first station on the Underground Railway, and this man was the resident agent!

He closed his lantern, and led the way towards a light which, for the first time, they now saw gleaming over the fields a mile ahead. It was the agent's residence. When they reached it, he led them to a barn near by, unlocked the door, and directed them to lie down on a wide-spread haymow, where the hay had evidently been prepared more for sleeping purposes than for feeding cattle. Here he asked them in the kindest manner if any of them were hungry. Katy tells me now that the soft, kind, and pitying voice of this good man fell upon her heart with an overwhelming tenderness that melted her into tears. All doubts of her having got among friends instead of enemies, were now removed, and giving way to a burst of thankfulness, and of weeping, she confessed that none but the children of the party had eaten anything for two days! Their protector told them to remain perfectly quiet, not to answer any person but himself, should they be spoken to from the outside, and he would shortly return with provision for them. Oh, what a contrast it was! the first kind word from a white man that any of them had heard for years! He passed out of the door, locked it behind him; and in half an hour returned, bearing a large bucket of hot milk, with bread, meat, and warm potatoes. His wife came with warm water, in which to wash the children's feet, which she knew by former experience would be found torn and blistered by hard travel, and ointment in which to wrap them up for the night. These famished creatures devoured the providential supply of food with eager thankfulness. How little can we who hear this narrative realise their true condition—two days without eating! The grateful meal over, they threw themselves down to sleep—tired, sore, and emaciated—and, for the first time in many nights, were able to dismiss all fear of either bloodhound or of man.

Who was the good Samaritan, what was the name of his farm, or the number of his family, are facts not lying within the line of explanation. The worthy man's wife and daughters clothed the ragged refugees, and his sons, by means of fleet horses, forwarded them to Philadelphia, where the party were lost to pursuit.

The remarkable incident of the story, however, remains to be told. The widowed Katy was famous as a cook. She immediately hired out in a hotel, and when she had saved three months' wages, quitted her place, and set off on her return to Virginia, determined to save that daughter whose sudden timidity had caused her to refuse joining in the general flight. This bold woman had formed this very determination when she first discovered her daughter's intention to remain on the plantation. Her mind came to the conclusion instantly, that if they all succeeded in getting off, she would return into the lion's den and rescue her child. Her mind being thus made up on the spot, the subject became an outside issue, and occasioned no embarrassment to the original plan. On this return-journey she travelled alone. Having no children to embarrass her, and but a single care upon her thoughts, she pushed forward with elastic heart and step, and after numerous hardships and dangers, found herself in a dense thicket, on her master's plantation. Here she quickly revealed her presence to her fellow-slaves. They were confounded by her hardihood, and listened with eager attention to the story of her dangers, her successes, and her explanation of what she had in view. They related to her how exasperated her master had been on discovering that ten of his chattels had gone off in a body; that, when pursuit had been found unavailing, her poor timid daughter had been subjected to repeated torture to compel a disclosure of the plot; that from this cruelty she was even then scarcely recovered; that in the interval the master had died, and that his negroes were all soon to be sold at auction. With her usual quickness of purpose, Katy resolved to be off immediately. The negroes brought the daughter to her the same night. No reproaches passed from mother to child—the past she had forgotten—everything to her was in the future. As there was nothing about which to debate, and as the wardrobe of a slave is always on his back, they were ready to start on the instant. Long before midnight they began their flight. Two stalwart negro men, glowing with aspirations for liberty, accompanied them. It was lucky for all that they did. The daughter, still weak and sore from her terrible punishments, broke down on the way. They carried her whenever she was unable to walk, and heroically bore her over creek, and swamp, and river.

That sentinel, divinely stationed in the heavens, as well to guide the mariner over midnight waters as to lead the fugitive from bondage through a more desolate solitude on land—the north star—still shone before them, still proved their guide. The extraordinary sagacity of Katy was shewn throughout the journey. Her memory was such that she was able to recognise the features of the slave-region through which she passed, so that she followed very nearly the same route she had taken on the first exodus. How direct or circuitous it might be, she knew not. But twice it had proved a path of safety, and might be found so again. Extraordinary as it may seem, this remarkable woman found her way a second time to the Samaritan who kept the station on the Underground road. She marched bravely up to the farm-house in a blinding tempest of rain, at midnight. A light was streaming from an upper window, shewing that some one of the family was about. While the others sheltered themselves under the lee of the building, she knocked timidly at the door. It was opened by the good man of the house. He beckoned her in, having immediately recognised her, and motioned her to a chair which stood in the hall. Here she sat down. No persons were visible below, but overhead she heard voices, and footsteps, and sobbing. There was sore sickness and grief in that house. The daughter who, on a former occasion, had washed her grandchildren's feet, anointed them and bound them up, was dying. With faltering accents the father told the dripping fugitive the story of his child's sickness and approaching dissolution, as he piloted her and her companions to the well-remembered haymow. But in his own grief he did not forget theirs. Dry clothing, warm food, and safe shelter were all extended to them as aforetime. The good man's daughter died at daybreak. But that night the sons were far on their way with the fugitives to the next station. They reached their journey's end in safety. Was not Katy, though a poor negro woman, a real heroine?

THE SWORD.

From time immemorial, the sword has been associated in the minds of men with fearful power, and with symbolic meanings. It was at once the sign and the instrument; and for this very reason, perhaps, did awe and superstition invest it with dread and peculiar attributes. For the commonest object, as soon as it is lifted from its accustomed sphere, by being made the representative of an idea, affords always matter on which the imagination exercises its sway. It then at once ceases to be inorganic, lifeless, senseless matter: the thoughts which, as symbol, it called forth in us, we gradually allow ourselves to associate with the thing itself; and, by a strange process, it ceases to be a dead lump, and becomes possessed of a nature that we would fain propitiate, if ruthless, and win over, if benign.

The very purposes to which the sword was put might well inspire a certain dread; and we all know of what a numerous issue Fear is the progenitor. The child of the present day would not be quite unmoved if alone in presence of the sword with which the murderer had suffered the penalty of his crime; and if some unperceived cause should make the sharp blade stir as he stood before it, that quiver would assuredly be met by a thrill through his whole frame, not to be repressed, although for the feeling no reason could be given; and, in the childhood of the nations, it was the same. An instrument which was to take away the wondrous gift of life, and in the place of quick existence, to bring immobility, silence, and impenetrable mystery, carried with it something of trouble and dread; and this, too, whether the victim were the dumb offering at the altar, or a human creature in the fight.

The weapon that had gleamed, instinct with life, above the havoc of the battle, might be fancied to grow weary of years of inactivity; and a chance starting of the blade from its scabbard would be interpreted as a sign of coming strife, which the roused weapon longed for with a trembling joy. Marvellous escapes, doughty blows dealt forth against antagonists, vainly shielded by their shirts of mail, might tend to encourage a belief that the blade was tempered by extraordinary means. The notion once cherished, every endeavour would be made that it should be realised; many a spell would accompany the weapon's forging, just as in later times prayers evoked a blessing on the unsullied blade.

From its form and mode of use, a peculiar intimacy springs up between the sword and him who carries it. When at rest, it still is at his side—a faithful friend ready at every need. It is girded to his loins: the two are firmly bound together. When grasped, it seems but a continuation of the warrior's arm; and being metal throughout, whatever it touches, causes a vibration to thrill through its length, and the living arm feels with a quick, nice sense each quiver of its doom-dealing helpmate. In the deadly fight, they become one.

The club, the spear, the battle-axe—none of these were to the warrior like his sympathetic sword. The bow and the musket, from their very contrivance, preclude such corresponding intimacy; they are, moreover, laid aside when done with; there is none of that close fellowship which exists between the soldier and his sword; for it is his companion, not only in the fatal struggle, but it goes with him to the bower and the festival.

The sword has become the type of manly daring; and if the arm that wielded it gave power to the weapon, it in return reflected back on the wearer consideration and honour; and he who bore it knew this, and the feeling bound the two more firmly together. For some men, the sword hewed out a path to authority and renown; it was their whole estate; their one sole faithful friend. To such, it was indeed a 'might-giver;' to others, it was a 'joy-bringer.' It involved itself with the destiny of the possessor, till at last it seemed to be the arbiter of his fate. Hence, in those old times—overgrown with the gray moss of countless centuries, and so remote, that we are now unable to discern what is cloud and what reality—men gave their good swords a name, as they did their heroes or their sons.

From being the symbol of vengeance, it grew into the avenger; and later even, when Christianity infused a different spirit into men's hearts, an old remembrance, a but half-forgotten myth would still mix itself up with new customs and with holier rites. Christian and heathen alike, therefore, held the sword in honour. Its praise was sung by bard, and scald, and troubadour; by the old Scandinavian heroes, and by our own gallant cavaliers. It was the weapon with which the angels of God were armed; in all ages, it has been a symbol of power; in later times, it stands as the sign of lawful authority and justice. Men swore upon its blade; and the traitor at heart quailed when he thought of the vengeance he had himself thus called down on treachery. To the legionary of heathen Rome, such oath was inviolate. It also bound, too, still more closely such Christian men as those three of Schwytz, and Unterwalden, and Uri. It became the representative of a family's honour; a precious deposit, to be redeemed at any price. Its loss was a grief and a dishonour; its surrender, a token of being vanquished, and of submission. The hilt of the sword formed a cross, and as such, stuck upright in the ground, was often used in the field when celebrating religious rites. As crucifix, it was held before the eyes of the dying soldier, or laid in the hand of him who bound himself by a vow. It was carried before the bridegroom by his friends at the wedding festival; it was laid, too, upon the bier of the departed warrior, thus accompanying him still on his last earthly pilgrimage—at once a trophy and a badge.

Thus we see not only how intimately the sword was associated with the affections and passions of humanity, but learn at the same time to account for the connection. Let us now dwell more particularly on the facts themselves, to which we have hitherto made only a passing allusion.

The sword of the Cimbri, like that of the ancient Gauls, was very long, pointless, and intended only for hewing. It was worn at the right side, suspended by two iron chains. By the Franks, it was carried in a girdle fastened round the body, while the Goths bore their weapon in a belt thrown across the shoulder. The Alimannen, or ancient Germans, had swords of a considerable length and breadth, but without a point, and two-handed; and when wielded by a powerful man, would, it was asserted, cleave rider and horse asunder at a single blow.

The custom of giving names to swords, which occurred so frequently in the romantic periods of the middle ages, was doubtless a heritage bequeathed by our heathen forefathers. In the Edda, the sword forged by Regin for Sigurd is called Gram; and in the Song of the Vikingr, the smith Wieland makes one named Mimung. In the old lays about Charlemagne, we find his sword was known as Joyeuse; Roland's was called Durandel; and Flamberg that of Richard of Montalembow. Time and circumstance, but especially the character of the warrior, influenced the choice of the distinctive appellation. Thorstein Raudi * felt it was his good brand alone which would mete out to him the lordships he strove for, and which, too, would give him power; hence he shouts: 'Land-giver! I kiss thee; might-giver! I kiss thee.' When childless and sireless, he would rest beneath the brown heath, he exclaims, addressing himself to his sword:

Thou wilt rest on my bosom
And with it decay,
While harps shall be ringing,
And scalds shall be singing
The deeds we have done in
Our own fearless day.

And therefore, in a prophetic spirit, he adds one last exulting appellation, 'Song-giver! I kiss thee.' To the lover and patriot Körner, his sword was 'his bride that moved beside him.'

The ancient Britons cherished so great a love for their sword, that it was customary for the mother of every boy to offer him his first food on the blade-point of his father's sword, at the same time expressing the wish that from such weapon, and from such only, might he meet his death; thereby implying that he might fall in battle.

In remotest time, the sword was emblematic of chastity. When the Emperor Maximilian married Maria of Burgundy by proxy, he enjoins the knight who is to be his representative to lay him down in the bridal-bed, to which he is to lead the princess, in full armour, and to place a drawn sword between himself and her.

It was probably this attribute of purity which caused sword-blades to be used in certain ordeals, when the innocence or guilt of a wife was determined by the result of her walking among them.

That the perfect fabrication of an instrument on which the safety of him who bore it depended, should be a matter of earnest endeavour, is not to be wondered at. We now-a-days spare no pains in welding the iron for our anchors, neither do we leave unheeded any hint from science in forging our chain-cables. Had we not the help of science—of tested science—we too should seek other aid than that of Davy, or Faraday, or Liebig. There is a vulgar saying that poverty makes us acquainted with strange bedfellows. It is true enough; but it is equally true, also, that our passions cause us to make strange acquaintanceships. The desire of fame, of wealth, of power, drives men to dare the incredible, and opens to their teeming imagination sources of help in emergency which, in calmer moments, the most credulous would hardly trust to. But what we ardently wish, we all are inclined to believe; hence the influence of the black art, which in its day took the place of modern science; the breath of the magician professing to do what the impalpable galvanic stream now really *does* accomplish. There is no doubt, if unable to analyse, that we should still employ spells and exorcisms; and if we have quite discarded the cabala, it is only because we are possessed of something that is more sure.

In the Amelungen Lied, the qualities of a charm-forged sword are given, and the method of its fabrication. The smith Wieland was the maker. He had made a wager with an armourer, named Amilias, who lived at King Neiding's court, that he would forge a sword better than any suit of armour made by the latter. Amilias had been working for eleven months day and night at his master-piece before Wieland took thought about the sword; hereupon the king reminded him of his promise, and he set to work. Within seven days he had a sword ready, so hard and sharp, that the like had never before been seen on earth. But Wieland wished first to prove its quality, and for this purpose went with it to a rapid river. He threw in a flock of wool one foot in thickness, and let the stream carry it against the edge of the blade. It cut the wool in two with the utmost nicety. The king was overjoyed, and waved the excellent sword that he hoped to possess above his head; but it was so heavy, that his arm soon dropped. Smith Wieland was not contented with his work, and, taking a file, reduced the whole to powder. He then took meal and milk, and mixed up with the filings, so that a paste was formed, which he gave to a family of fowls to eat, that for three days had been kept without food. The birds' dung he then carefully collected, put in a furnace, and separated the dross from the liquid metal. Of this purified steel he in six days again forged a sword, still better and lighter than the other. To prove it, he went to the river and threw in light flakes of wool two feet in thickness, and tried the edge with the same success as before. But Wieland was not yet satisfied, and filing it to pieces, again gave it to the fowls to eat. This time he forged a blade that surpassed all that had ever yet existed, and was called 'Mimung.' With it he went to his rival Amilias, who meanwhile had fabricated a suit of armour, against which he affirmed every weapon would be shivered. Now, while he stood there in the market-place, Wieland laid his sword gently on the helm, and then gave it a slight pressure. On this the sword passed through both man and armour. Wieland asked: 'What do you feel?' 'It seems to me,' answered the other, 'as if a drop of water were trickling down my back.' 'Well,' replied Wieland, 'then shake off the drop.' Amilias shook himself, and fell in two halves to the earth, and was dead. So sharp was the good sword Mimung, that it had passed through helm, and bone, and marrow, without the other having felt it.

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* See the *Sword-chant of Thorstein Raudi*, Motherwell's Poems.

In the *Lady of the Lake*, we read that the sword of the Douglas was 'forged by fairy lore,' which, able to foreshew the coming of an enemy, on the entry of Snowdoun's knight 'self-unscabbarded' dropped upon the floor. The possession of such weapons was, as may be supposed, much coveted; and even when all faith in necromancy had died away, the sword of one who had wielded it successfully was always a desirable object. Some were consecrated by being wrapped up with relics and other holy things; on others, verses from the Bible were engraved; and we knew an old forester, now dead, who boldly went to meet the poachers, feeling sure of protection, as soon as he had girded round him his long hunting-knife, on which the Lord's Prayer was graven.

The swords of many leaders were obtained in a supernatural manner. Of Attila, the Hun, it is related that a herdsman observed blood on the leg of one of his oxen, and going nearer, saw something projecting from the ground. He dug it out, and behold, it was a large sword, which he presented to Attila. Nor was this belief in the wonderful transmission of a sword, of pagan growth only; the Maid of Orleans received the weapon with which she was to free her country from a divine messenger.

A vanquished enemy presented a sword to his conqueror, holding it by the point—a sign probably that the victor had the right to take his life with it. In some countries where land was ceded to another, the cession was symbolised by the presentation of a sword, that being the sign of judicial authority, and indicative of power over life and death.

Such meaning was no doubt implied when carried in marriage-processions. With the Frieslanders, a sword was borne before the bride, to indicate that her husband had power over her life.

To bear a coat of arms on the seal was a knightly privilege; and this right of affixing such seal to any document—to seal as well as sign—was a most cherished prerogative. For the sake of convenience, and that it might be always at hand, the seal was frequently engraven on the pommel of the sword. When, now, a knightly warrior impressed thus his arms on some record as testimony, a threefold power was given to the act, as, in addition to the mere fixing the signet, there was the bare upright sword-blade, which made the deed still more binding, and, thirdly, the cross on the hilt, by which Christ was called to witness what was done, and implied, moreover, 'in the name of God.'

It is certain, therefore, that the sword has, in a most strange manner, been closely connected with man's occupations and his faith, and this in all times, and among the most various people. It has entwined itself with the daily occurrences of his life; it has been assigned a post in his institutions, and even in his temples it is received with honour. We know these things, and even see that they are so, yet in all this there is somewhat that still seems a mystery.

POUDRE ROSÉ.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

II.

The prayers are done; the holy oil has dried upon the forehead of the anointed, tenantless clay, by the side whereof Adrienne Beaudésert is lying in a stupor of despair, which the nurse, gliding noiselessly about the room, does not think it prudent to disturb. We also will depart, following the abbé, who goes straight to the Château d'Em. The face of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré whitens visibly through the thick rouge, as she listens to the reverend man's tidings; and the moment his voice ceases, she hastens to place in his hands a large sum to be expended in masses for the dead man's soul. As to the funeral of the last male heir of the Beaudéserts, who is to be entombed in the catacombs of the Church of the Assumption, Madame de Vautpré desires that no expense shall be spared thereon; and the child Adrienne is to be assured that the heart of her too long estranged relative is yearning to embrace, to love, to cherish her. Monsieur Morlaix, moreover, who is shortly going to Paris on business, undertakes to be the bearer of one year's pension in advance, with the donor's good wishes, to Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert at Clichy.

The chief facts just related having been thought worthy of more than one paragraph in the local papers, and being skilfully marvelised to suit the public taste, had the effect of attracting a numerous concourse of curious spectators to the funeral—one of the most imposing, it was on all hands agreed, the *Pompes Funèbres* had got up for many years. The catafalque, especially, was magnificent; so much so, that the crowded congregation were divided in opinion as to which was most solemn and effective—it, the catafalque, or the Abbé Morlaix's funeral oration, grounded upon the scripture verse, 'Whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him.' The abbé's eloquent illustrations of his theme were also variously interpreted. Some held that they applied to the relentless cruelty of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré, punished by the untimely death, without male issue, of the heir to her house's honours; others, that the preacher had in mind the nephew's sin of ingratitude and disobedience towards his guardian and benefactress, resulting in misery and an early grave. Of this last opinion was Adrienne Beaudésert, upon whose heart the words of the abbé smote like so many sword-stabs aimed at her dead father, exciting in the mind of the wounded, sensitive girl a feeling of resentment towards the reverend orator, not, unhappily, to be soon or easily effaced. Of all the obsequious attendants surrounding her, there was not one who felt, or successfully assumed to feel, the slightest sympathy with her bitter grief. It was the less surprising, therefore—terribly indecorous in the heiress of Madame de Vautpré as it might be—that, upon recognising Jules Delpech in the crowd, as she was leaving the church, Mademoiselle Beaudésert darted away from her *entourage*, and threw herself sobbing violently into the gray-headed man's arms. She was, of course, promptly plucked back to her proper place in the procession, and a few minutes afterwards driven rapidly off to her future residence, the Château d'Em. Jules Delpech seemed to be not a little disconcerted, as well as astonished, at so sudden and public a demonstration of the young lady's regard; but the first flurry over, the emotion it excited, coloured, shaped, by an elastic, sanguine imagination, assumed a hopeful, brilliant hue, as those telescopic eyes of his, piercing, as I have said, far into the dim future, descried the yet distant possibilities suggested by such pregnant facts as Mademoiselle Beaudésert's partiality or respect for himself so openly manifested; the well-remembered and marked partiality evinced towards Paul, his young and handsome son, by the unsophisticated heiress of an ailing lady long since passed her grand climacteric, when she, the heiress, was domiciled with her father at his cottage, furnishing, with minor collateral facts or fancies, ample material for castle-building. The subtle brain of Jules Delpech was glowing, palpitating with the crowding images it had conjured up by the time he reached his own door; whence, looking upwards in the direction of the Château d'Em, it seemed to him that the central tower of the splendid pile, high overtopping the intervening belt of forest trees, looked haughtily and contemptuously down upon the lowly hut whose habitant dared to lift himself even in imagination to that lordly eminence! 'For all that,' muttered the white lips of Jules Delpech, as he entered his cottage and closed the door, 'worse cards than we hold have won as great a game. "What," said the great orator of the Mountain, "is the secret and condition of an else impossible success?—*de l'audace, et encore de l'audace*"—and *moral* audacity, where failure incurs no peril, niggard nature has *not* denied me.'

Jules Delpech was a *capitaine de douanes en retraite*, or, as we say, a superannuated officer of customs. His retiring pension was a small one; but the cottage in which he lived, and about three acres of adjoining land, were his own by inheritance; and as both himself and son—a really fine lad, about three years older than Adrienne Beaudésert, of pleasant manners and somewhat superior education—were sufficiently skilful and industrious cultivators, the retired *douanier* was looked upon, and really was, for his social status, a thriving, prosperous man. In one respect, Jules Delpech deserved commendation, though it may be that his conduct was governed by no higher motive than a wholesome dread of the penalties of the law—he refused, to the huge chagrin of many of the neighbours, to add to his income by the traffic which had helped his widowed mother, the late Madame Delpech, to keep house and land together, her son at school, and a well-filled purse of silver crowns always at hand for an emergency. Madame Delpech, in brief, ostensibly a herbalist, had for many years derived an income, though of no very considerable amount, probably, from the practice of a species of charlatanism, common in the French rural districts—that of selling to simple rustics, and not unfrequently to as simple-minded town-folk, certain charms, love-powders, vegetable preservatives of various kinds from harm, spiritual or corporeal, and magical compounds wherewith to compel the favour, else despaired of, of some obdurate Jeannette or Jeannot, as the case might be. One of those love-charms, called *poudre rosé*, had, from some accidental coincidence, attained so wide a celebrity as to engage the attention of the Correctional Police Court of Lyon, a distinction which had the effect of compelling the cheating old beldam to be more discreet and wary in the sale of her magical wares, and more particularly of coloured bean-meal, *alias* poudre rosé, at the rate of five francs the half-ounce. This nefarious traffic was, as I have intimated, at all events ostensibly, publicly repudiated by the retired officer of customs, albeit it was confidently hinted that upon more than one occasion, when tempted by a sufficiently considerable fee, he had violated that wise resolution, and dispensed his mother's nostrums—especially the poudre rosé—with the best effect. This, I say, was the common scandal or gossip of a district on the left bank of the Rhône, not far from the city of Lyon, no longer ago than the thirty-seventh year of this enlightened nineteenth century; and I greatly doubt whether a rural commune could be pointed out in all the vast extent of France where a like credulity is not more or less prevalent at this very day. This is a sad, undeniable truism; but it is not from our English glass-house that we can contemptuously cast stones, in scornful reprobation of such hurtful follies, at our neighbours; for superstitions all as gross are to be found in as vigorous vitality in many of the rural districts of Great Britain. Imposture and credulity are unfortunately indigenous to all countries and climes, as well as marvellously self-adaptive to varying exigencies and conditions.

But in stopping to explain or moralise, the story perforce halts also; and dismissing for a while Jules Delpech, and his visions, schemes, nostrums, I regain its current, at the moment of Adrienne Beaudésert's arrival at the Château d'Em, where she was received with every demonstration of regard; and it really seemed that Madame de Vautpré's heart was touched by the sorrow of the interesting grand-niece, in whose features she discerned, or fancied, a striking resemblance to General Beaudésert, the brother, whose memory, spite of the Bresson *mésalliance*, she had always tenderly cherished. The establishment of the château was an extremely well-ordered one; its disciplinary march, perfect in a mechanical point of view; but it was unfortunate for a girl of Adrienne Beaudésert's temperament and tendencies that Madame de Vautpré had already reached so far into the vale of life, as not only to have lost sight of the busy, practical world in which she had passed her youth and prime of days, but that it no longer lingered in her memory save as a far-off dream of acted vanities; illusions—excepting always the hallowing verity of high lineage—hurtful, if not sinful to voluntarily dwell upon, because tending to lure her mind from the contemplation, through the dusky glass of polemical dogmatism, of the eternity upon the brink of which she stood. Now, it is quite clear to me, from what I have heard and read of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré, that her ascetic piety was of the sincerest kind, as assuredly her charity—thereby meaning alms-giving—was liberal and comprehensive; but the adoption of a profitable piety by dependents not only frequently stops at, but exaggerates the externals of devotion; and as might be expected in such a household, most of the persons in attendance upon the heiress, in their anxious affectation of a religious fervour they did not feel, were enthusiastic about forms, attributed supernatural efficacy to beads, if not to the prayers they measured—to the image, though careless or unthoughtful of the prototype. In a mental atmosphere so generated and maintained, it is hardly to be wondered at that the faith in charms, amulets, and the like fantasies, imbibed by Adrienne Beaudésert in her childhood, instead of being rebuked, gathered force and authority from the countenance afforded it by apparently similar religious convictions. Had the Abbé Morlaix, now chaplain to the household, possessed her confidence, his wiser teaching might have dissipated such noxious illusions; but since that, as she deemed it, heartless, cruel funeral oration, Mademoiselle Beaudésert, despite the abbé's strenuous endeavours to conciliate her good-will, ceased not to regard him with mingled feelings of aversion and mistrust. Instead of complaining to Madame de Vautpré that the sensitive girl resolutely declined his spiritual guidance, the abbé left it to time to remove her unjust antipathy—but alas! time frequently halts in the accomplishment of his errands, and arrives with the healing remedy only to witness the death of the patient.

Thus grew in years, in beauty, in guileless simplicity of heart and mind, Adrienne Beaudésert;

Madame de Vautpré continuing the while towards her the stately courtesy, the regulated, unvarying kindness which she had from the first imposed upon herself. Madame la Baronne never went into society, nor encouraged visitors at the château. Adrienne's education in the accomplishments of music, painting, history, foreign languages, &c., was intrusted to the sisters of a Ursuline convent in the neighbourhood, whither and back she was daily escorted in a carriage; and the only male persons, except servants and M. Morlaix, with whom she ever held the slightest converse, were Jules Delpech and his son Paul, one or other of whom she was pretty sure to meet whenever she ventured—never without a watchful attendant—beyond the château grounds. They had always a very respectful, yet, as it were, kindly familiar greeting for her; and handsome Paul—it was impossible that Mademoiselle Beaudésert, slightly impressionable as she was in that direction, could help remarking that he was a very handsome young fellow—had often a fresh bouquet to present, whatever was the season of the year. These *rencontres* do not appear to have been reported to Madame de Vautpré or the Abbé Morlaix, or what they might, and justly, have deemed the impertinent audacity of the Delpechs, would, there can be little doubt, have been summarily repressed.

But it was not such love as that with which Paul Delpech had the vanity to believe he had inspired the girl-heiress, that, by the time she touched upon her sixteenth birthday, had banished every tinge of colour from the drooping maiden's cheek, light from her eyes, wasted her finely rounded form, and still burned in her veins with the fever of a consuming passion. Adrienne Beaudésert, child or girl of exquisite sensibility, was, be it remembered, morally isolated in her relative's magnificent abode, with no one to love, and beloved by none; the aching void thus created becoming, with every passing day, more completely monopolised, filled to bursting by the imaged memories of her mother and sister; of that tender mother, that sweet sister, who so fully reciprocated her gushing, passionate love; but whom she was only permitted to see once in each dreary year, and in the constraining presence of Madame la Baronne; to correspond with only at stated intervals, and under the same chilling supervision. Adrienne's heart beat wildly, rebelliously, against those cruel, unnatural restraints; and who at all conversant with poor human nature, will feel surprise that, finding her aunt inexorable, callous, deaf to her tears, entreaties, prayers, the indignant girl began to listen with kindling eyes and glowing cheeks to remarks upon Madame de Vautpré's fast-failing health, hating herself the while, as she afterwards declared, for the involuntary feeling revealed in those keenly marked, tell-tale signs; that in moments of great irritation, words of the like significance, eagerly caught up, repeated, exaggerated, distorted, escaped her lips; or that, after a last, supreme effort, preceded by sets of prayers, gone through as if they were so many incantations—votive garlands, suspended upon statues of the Virgin and saints—to shake Madame de Vautpré's fixed resolve, had failed, the girl with much less excuse, because with more deliberation, poured forth her passionate feelings to her mother in writing? This letter she thought to have sent off surreptitiously, but the treachery of the servant to whom it was intrusted, placed in the hands of M. Morlaix—all the griefs, resentments, hopes, and anticipations by which her mind was distracted! The abbé was profoundly disturbed upon reading the intercepted letter; and immediately sending for Mademoiselle Beaudésert, sternly upbraided her with the black ingratitude displayed in the sinful effusion she had dared to pen; dwelt especially upon the heinous crime of but *imagining* the death of her kind relative and benefactress; concluding with a solemn warning that one of God's heaviest judgments was to curse the wicked with the fulfilment of their own evil wishes.

Adrienne Beaudésert was rebuked, humbled, terrified—but not softened or subdued, as she would have been to tears of deepest contrition, had but a few words of kindness or compassion mingled with the abbé's stern homily. The strong consciousness that whatever seeming colour or justification, her wild, hasty expressions might give to the abbé's injurious denunciations, her heart had never for one moment harboured the dreadful thoughts to which those denunciations pointed, helped to sustain her yielding, flexile nature during the terrible interview; and not till, escaped to the privacy of her own chamber, did she sink upon the floor, crushed, convulsed by the rending agony of humiliated pride, degrading accusation, and bitter self-reproach.

No doubt, too, she felt, as the tumult of conflicting passions calmed somewhat, that M. Morlaix would deem it his duty to place the letter, blackened with his own comments, before Madame de Vautpré; and then farewell for ever to the visions of future independence and grandeur in which she had, it seemed, not thoughtlessly only, but wickedly indulged. Not that Adrienne Beaudésert, child-thoughted girl, valued present or prospective splendour very highly, but her mother did—as we, remembering how impatiently Madame Beaudésert bore the evanishment of her own dream of youthful grandeur, can easily believe—and at her yearly visits, talked privately of little else than the coming, though it might be distant time, which was to compensate a thousandfold for the bitter past, the halting, unsatisfactory present. Here was a new grief, but, as it proved, an imaginary one only; as the abbé, whether wisely or not the sequel will shew, did not communicate or mention the contents of the letter to Madame de Vautpré. During these painful passages in Mademoiselle Beaudésert's girl-life, and indeed almost from the first day of her domiciliation at the Château d'Em, Jules Delpech had contrived to keep himself acquainted with all that passed there; and with the blind infatuation of a foregone conclusion, persisted in persuading himself, or trying to do so, that the change in Adrienne's personal appearance, her reported fits of moody melancholy, were solely attributable to a growing and invincible attachment to his son—an attachment that would perhaps be openly avowed when the tomb closed over Madame de Vautpré—an event which, he believed, would not be long waited for. Nor was this sinister belief or trust unfounded.

The elasticity of hope is in youth rarely completely crushed; and before many days had gone by, Adrienne's brain was again busy with expedients for bringing about the family reconcilement upon which her mind was set with such morbid intensity; and all the more eagerly, that the third annual visit of her relatives was close at hand. But the resources of tears, supplications, incantations, votive-offerings, having failed, what other device remained likely to insure a fortunate result? Mademoiselle Beaudésert was thus anxiously ruminating, when Lisette Meudon, a favourite and shrewd attendant, took occasion, whilst perfecting the transparent-thoughted young lady's dinner-toilet, to remark, with reference to a wedding soon to take place among the château servants, how extraordinary it was that *ce gros vieux Bonsard* should have won so easily the affections of young and pretty Fanchette Lenoir, who was, moreover, quite as well, if not better off, than he. 'Certainly,' she added with emphasis, 'such a match could not have been brought about without the help of the poudre rosé, or similar magic compound.'

'Poudre rosé!' murmured Adrienne, turning her unquiet, dreamy eyes upon the attendant; 'I have heard that spoken of before. What are its real or supposititious virtues?'

'I can assure mademoiselle,' replied Lisette, 'that there is no supposition in the case. The poudre rosé is well known to possess extraordinary virtues, though I should not like Madame de Vautpré or the Abbé Morlaix, both of whom have unreasonable prejudices upon such matters, to hear me say so. For example, there was Marie Deveulle, a widow with a strong cast in her eyes, four small children, and not a liard's worth of property, who married, about a fortnight after she was seen to pay a sly visit to the late Madame Delpech, Jean Lucas, a good-looking young farmer, and one of the most prosperous in the commune. It must be admitted that nothing short of very marvellous magic could have accomplished such a marriage as that. For my part,' added Lisette, 'I should feel no scruple, if an opportunity occurred—— But I am fatiguing mademoiselle.'

'Not at all, Lisette; you interest me, on the contrary. How is this precious poudre rosé administered?'

'Nothing more simple, mademoiselle. The prescribed quantity is placed in a glass of wine, a cup of coffee—no matter what. The wine or coffee is then handed—let us, by way of illustration, suppose—to Jean Lucas by Marie Deveulle, she looking her *futur* smilingly in the face all the while; he drinks, and the affair is finished. Certainly, there can be no such great harm in all that, even if everybody, with the exception of Madame la Baronne and Monsieur Morlaix, deceive themselves as to the wonderful powers of the poudre rosé.'

'No harm, as you say, Lisette, if no good. And is it not said to be equally efficacious in reconciling enmities—between, for example, estranged relatives?'

'O yes, mademoiselle; I could tell you of several such instances—of one particularly, where'——

Lisette's instances were cut short by the last summons of the dinner-bell. But the interesting colloquy was renewed the next day, when the wily confidante succeeded, if not in persuading Mademoiselle Beaudésert into an absolute belief in the miraculous properties of the poudre rosé, to at least consult Delpech *père* upon the subject. 'My father's friend,' thought Adrienne, 'who will be sure to deal frankly with me. My grandmamma,' she added aloud, 'had great faith in such charms. Still, I can hardly—— But, as you say, Lisette, there can be no possible harm in making the trial;' and her scruples thus silenced, the rash girl sat down to write a note appointing a private interview with Delpech on the morrow, at a place indicated by Lisette, and not very distant from the château.

'*Paul* Delpech, mademoiselle,' hastily interposed the waiting-woman, as her unsuspecting mistress was about to address the note.

'Yes, certainly. I had it in my head, as I told you, that Paul was the son's name; but of course you know. You will keep this, perhaps foolish, matter profoundly secret,' she added, as Lisette was leaving the room.

'Secret as the grave,' replied the young woman quickly, and with averted face, lest Adrienne should see the triumph flashing there. 'Delpech himself shall not suspect that I am aware of the contents of this note; mademoiselle may fully rely upon me.'

'Here is the *assignation*, monsieur,' said Lisette Meudon about an hour afterwards, addressing Jules Delpech. 'You turn pale, and tremble very much,' she presently added. 'There is, I hope, nothing more meant by this frolic than what I know of?'

'Nothing—nothing, Lisette,' replied Delpech, fumbling in his purse with shaking fingers for some gold pieces, and placing them in her ready palm. 'And when the wedding takes place, yours with Claude Simonet—if a fat dowry can win the old man's consent—will not be far off.'

'That is well understood, Monsieur Delpech. But tell me why,' added the young woman, still under the influence of a suddenly awakened feeling of distrust—'if you are so positive Mademoiselle Beaudésert has a decided *penchant* for your handsome son, are you so anxious to compromise her by these pretended assignations? As to the poudre rosé pretence, that, excuse me, is as absurd as the faith of the credulous fools about here in its wonder-working powers.'

'You err, Lisette,' replied Delpech. 'If Mademoiselle Beaudésert once partakes of some wine, tinctured with poudre rosé, in Paul's presence, I shall have no fear that the wedding will be long delayed after Madame la Baronne has taken her place in the vaults of the Church of the Assumption.'

'That may be, Monsieur Delpech; but you know Mademoiselle Beaudésert will never do anything of the kind, just as well as I do, that you dare not propose it to her. I have no misgivings upon that point. Mademoiselle is as sensitive and proud as she is pure and simple-hearted. Still,' added Lisette, one of that numerous class of persons whose aid in evil purposes may, for a sufficiently tempting reward, be counted upon to a certain extent, but no further—'still it occurs to me, that if you really are so confident'——

'I will be frank with you, Lisette Meudon,' interrupted Delpech, swallowing the rage he felt at the woman's persistence. 'I saw Madame la Baronne a few days since: she is going fast; Mademoiselle Beaudésert will soon and suddenly find herself in a dazzling position, which now she can have no just idea of. Her mother, a woman of the world, will be with her—parasites, flatterers, suitors innumerable, will crowd about her. All this may turn her head. It is prudent, therefore, to strengthen Paul's hold upon her fancy by these little compromising arts, which, when one is prompted by a laudable ambition, are, you will agree, perfectly permissible.'

'Perhaps. However, I do not see that any great harm can accrue. The marriage-portion,' added Lisette, opening and holding the door in her hand—'the marriage-portion, Monsieur Delpech will do well to remember, should he succeed in his audacious project, must be a liberal one, and legally secured *before* the grand wedding takes place.'

'Precisely, *ma fille*. Paul and myself, moreover, will owe you a large debt of gratitude for your services and silence.'

'*Chut, chut!* I look to be rewarded by money, not moonshine, Monsieur Delpech.'

'Claude Simonet,' said Jules Delpech with a wry grimace, meant for a complimentary smile—'Claude Simonet won't be the father of fools, if his children take after his pretty wife.'

'He won't, in that case, be the father of *dupes*,' was the retort; 'a fact which, I repeat, the Delpechs, father and son, will do well to bear in mind. *Bonjour*, monsieur.'

'*Au plaisir*, Mademoiselle Meudon,' responded Jules Delpech, adding with a savage snap of his teeth as the door closed: 'The insolent hussy! I should like, instead of a dowry, to accommodate her with a'—— *What*, he did not say; but one might have sworn from his looks it was something which Lisette Meudon would have decidedly demurred to as the substitute for a handsome marriage-portion.

The child-heart of Adrienne Beaudésert beat violently, and a vague feeling of terror so oppressed her, upon approaching the appointed rendezvous on the following day, that she was upon the point of turning back and abandoning her purpose. 'It was the last effort,' she afterwards said, 'of my guardian angel to draw me back from the precipice to which

I was madly hastening. It was made in vain. I shook off the warning impulse, bade the valet remain where he was for a few minutes, and hastened on.'

Jules Delpech would have made a capital actor, if one might judge by his natural assumption of surprise and deferential interest, as Mademoiselle Beaudésert, blushing and painfully agitated, stood before him. It was some time before he appeared able to even dimly make out her meaning from the confused, hurried sentences in which it was expressed. At last he seemed to catch it, but still uncertainly.

'Mademoiselle Beaudésert wishes to know of me if there is any truth in the reported marvels effected by the poudre rosé. Do I rightly comprehend her?'

'Yes, that is the question I wish to put; and if—if; but perhaps it is all an idle tale?'

'It is *not* an idle tale,' replied Delpech, with well-sembled gravity and earnestness. 'The miraculous properties of the poudre rosé have been proved over and over again; but mademoiselle is perhaps not aware that to dispense it is to act in contravention of the law, though not of morality?'

'O no, I had not thought of that; and I would not for the world that'——

'If, mademoiselle,' interrupted Delpech, 'will tell me frankly for what purpose she requires the poudre rosé, the wish to serve a daughter of the noble-minded victim who once honoured me with the name of friend, will, if I see a probability of doing so effectively, render me indifferent to any legal penalties I may incur.'

'Ah, monsieur,' said Adrienne, her soft eyes filling with tears at the allusion to her father, 'it is because you were *his* friend that I wished to consult you, knowing that I should not be either deceived or exposed to ridicule. I have a fancy to try the effect of poudre rosé upon—upon Madame de Vautpré.'

'Madame de Vautpré!' ejaculated Jules Delpech, in a tone and with a start that would not have disgraced Talma—'Madame de Vautpré! For what purpose, in the name of Heaven?'

Adrienne explained; Jules Delpech the while, as she subsequently recalled to mind, though too agitated and confused at the moment to appreciate its strange significance—Jules Delpech, I say, gazing the while into her eyes with a piercing intensity, as if more desirous of reading there the secret of her soul, than of listening to the words of her mouth.

'I understand you, Mademoiselle Beaudésert,' said Delpech, with slow, stage-solemnity of speech. 'The poudre rosé *will* effect your purpose in giving it to Madame de Vautpré.'

'Seriously, I am so glad; for do you know, Monsieur Delpech, I felt almost sure that you would say it was a childish, absurd illusion.'

'When shall I place it in mademoiselle's hands?' inquired Delpech.

'To-morrow, if you please, at this place and hour.'

'Be it so, mademoiselle: I will be punctual and *silent*.'

'Almost a woman, and a charming one too in person,' muttered Delpech, looking after Mademoiselle Beaudésert as she hurried back to where she had left the valet—'in mind, the veriest child! The amiable Ursulines may prepare their pupils very well for heaven, but certainly they do not succeed in fitting them to deal with this wicked world. After all, Paul will make her an excellent husband; and if, which is quite possible, we have deceived ourselves as to the young lady's partiality for him, or at least that it is so decided as to induce her to stoop to a union with him from the height whereon a very few days, or I err greatly, will see her placed, it will require the iron link which I have so successfully begun to forge, to coerce and bind her prideful will. As yet, at all events, I can say *beau jeu, bien joué;* and, best of all, should our audacious project, as it may be truly called, fail, neither Paul nor I shall be seriously compromised, as I will manage; but it will not, *cannot* fail.'

Madame Beaudésert and her daughter Clarisse had passed the stipulated number of hours at the Château d'Em, and were seated at breakfast with Madame de Vautpré, M. Morlaix, and Adrienne; which repast concluded, the two visitors would be conveyed, in a carriage already in waiting, to the *Messageries Royales*, Lyon, *en route* for Clichy. M. Morlaix could not help remarking that Adrienne was very much more restless, perturbed, ill at ease, than on the like former occasions. And why were the burning eyes of the pale, agitated girl turned with such intense, sudden scrutiny upon Madame de Vautpré's countenance when Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert handed chocolate to that lady? Was it that Adrienne's solicitude was awakened by the signs of recent and severe suffering visible there, for Madame de Vautpré had passed a much worse night than usual, and at her own request had received the sacrament soon after rising.

The abbé would fain have believed so, but could not, knowing what he did. It was rather, he greatly feared, that that young, and, as he once thought, guileless, unworldly heart, was agitated by criminal hopes, which those signs of probably mortal disease had quickened and inflamed.

A harsh but perhaps not unnatural judgment! Poor Adrienne's criminal hopes were, in sooth, limited to the magical effect produced by the poudre rosé. Certainly, Madame de Vautpré's demeanour was more gracious towards her mother and sister than on former occasions; and, unhoped-for condescension! suffering and feeble as she was, Madame la Baronne would accompany them down the grand stairs to the entrance-hall; had shaken hands with Madame Beaudésert, and was about apparently to embrace Clarisse, when she suddenly staggered, caught wildly at vacancy, and fell heavily upon the tesselated pavement, before a hand could be stretched forth to save her. A medical gentleman, who had resided for several weeks at the château, was quickly on the spot, and opened a vein; a few drops of dark blood flowed, and at the end of a few breathless minutes, the man of science announced, in a grave whisper, that Madame de Vautpré was dead—dead of apoplexy!

'Apoplexy! you are certain of apoplexy!' said the abbé, addressing the surgeon, but with his stern glance fixed upon Adrienne's changing countenance, till she, overcome by a rush of contending emotion, lost her senses, and sank with a low moaning cry into her mother's arms.

FOOTPRINTS.

From the time of Robinson Crusoe downward, there has always been a sort of mysterious curiosity in people's minds when they encounter under peculiar circumstances, or in peculiar places, footprints, whether human or animal. Even in places well frequented, the print of a foot will often throw us into a train of thought, and sometimes arouse much interest, and even wonder—as, for instance, the mysterious footprints in the snow which occurred in Devonshire about three years ago, and which many people did not hesitate to ascribe to no less a personage than the Evil One. Sometimes other feelings than mere curiosity will prevail. Many a time when I have lost my way in the snow on the hills, have I been glad to light upon some track which I knew would bring me, if not to my destination, at least to some safe place where I could regain my bearings.

How well one can fancy the jealous suspicion with which early explorers examined such marks in an unknown and undescribed country; whether they proceeded from man or animals; if the former, whether they were the traces of natives, against whom they must carefully guard; and if the latter, whether of wild beasts, ready to pounce upon the unwary traveller, or of a more tame and domestic species, which they might hope to use for their own purposes in their new settlements.

In the present advanced state of natural history and geography, it would be almost impossible to discover any fresh countries, or even to lay hold of many new species of animals; but an equally interesting and mysterious study is opened to us—that of fossil footprints, as we find them engraven in the rocks of distant epochs, and which will remain as traces of the inhabitants of those ages for all time. This is a wide field open both to the geologist and the naturalist, one which calls into play all their reasoning powers and arguments—the one, to determine the age in which the marks were imprinted, the characters of the rock, and the conditions under which such creatures lived—the other, to ascertain the genera and species of such animals, whether mammals, birds, or reptiles, and in what classification of palæontology and natural history it should be placed. I propose in this paper to examine some of the most noted fossil marks of the kind, without burdening the minds of my readers with more geological technicalities than are absolutely necessary.

Fossil prints are by no means limited to any one formation, but are pretty general even down to very old stratified rocks; but the greatest number are to be found in the triassic formation. First let us inquire what this is, and where it occurs. In the regular order of strata of the earth's crust, beginning from above downward, we should first come upon the tertiary series, with its many important subdivisions, of which the best examples I can give are the clays of the Isle of Wight, and of the country extending from London to Norfolk. Below this is the chalk, with the green-sands and wealden, which everybody has seen who has visited the south of England, in the cliffs of Brighton and the downs of Kent.

Next we get the oolitic deposits, which are divided and subdivided into a great many subordinate layers, such as the Portland stone, Oxford clay, Kimmeridge clay, Forest marble, &c., and of which the country around Bath and Cheltenham is composed. These are succeeded by the lias, which is to be best seen in the cliffs of the Dorsetshire coast, and is the great repository of those enormous creatures, the ichthyosaurus and plesiosaurus, the fossil skeletons of which may be seen in the Geological Museum in Jermyn Street. We now arrive at the one we want—the trias or triassic formation, otherwise known as the new red sandstone. Everybody knows what red sandstone is—the differences between the new and old red formations are the differences of age, of the character of the deposits, and of the fossil remains. The parts of England where the new red can be best seen and studied are in Lancashire, in almost all Cheshire, and in portions of Shropshire and Warwickshire. This is enough to shew what an extensive surface is composed of these strata in this country. The trias are important too, not only geologically but commercially; for it is here that we find the great supply of salt; and were it not for this formation, we should come badly off for this very necessary article. The thickness of the whole series is about 1800 feet in England, for there is one member of the series which is developed abroad, and not known at all here. The highest division consists of what is called the Keuper beds (but which in general terms we may call the saliferous beds, as it is principally amongst their layers that the masses of salt are found), and are made up of alternate layers of sandstone, gypsum, clays, and marls. The middle series, termed abroad the Muschelkalk, is unknown here, as just stated, and is the most fossiliferous portion, producing the greatest variety of shells. The third and lowest is the Bunter sandstone, which in this country is about 600 feet in thickness, and contains red and green shales and marls, with sometimes white sandstones of a quartzose nature. This lowest series does not by any means swarm with fossils, but what there are, are deeply interesting. It is in this Bunter sandstone that we come upon the footprints, which may be well seen, either at the quarries near Lymm in Cheshire, or at Storeton Hill, not far from Birkenhead. They are like the impressions of a large human hand, and from this, for a long time, the animal supposed to have made the marks was called the cheirotherium, or the hand-footed beast. Now, the curious part of it was that the impressions of the hind foot are very much larger than those of the front, the hind foot being about eight inches long and five broad, and the other not more than half the size. The steps follow each other in regular pairs, at intervals of about fourteen inches between each pair; and each mark gives the impression of five toes, of which the first or great toe was bent out just like a thumb. Added to this is the fact, that on the same slabs were discovered ripple-marks, and in some places the marks of rain-drops. Here was a puzzle. Why had not this creature left its bones behind it to tell us at once what it belonged to? since bones it must have had, and a tolerably heavy body, to have left so deep a footprint. Doctors differed on the subject; some naturalists put them down as belonging to animals of the kangaroo tribe, because there is in them the same disproportion between the hind and the front feet. Others thought that the marks were made by batrachians, or frog-like creatures, and others, again, that they were crocodilian. One thing was clear, and that was, that the sandstone upon which they had walked had once been a wet beach, which had sunk down so as to allow a fresh wet beach to be formed above it; and this was borne out by the testimony of the ripple-marks. They must, therefore, have been air-breathers. While the savans were puzzling over this problem, some teeth were discovered in the same formation in Warwickshire, which Professor Owen, on examination, declared to be the teeth of some batrachian reptile of a gigantic size. The teeth were very peculiar, a section of them presenting a large number of labyrinthine folds and windings; and from this fact he named the possessor of the teeth the labyrinthodon. Afterwards, the discovery of a few bones, also in the same series, enabled him to put all his facts together, and infer with every probability that the labyrinthodon and the cheirotherium were one and the same, and that they were large toadlike, air-breathing reptiles.

This is only one of the many brilliant examples shewn by our eminent men in the study of geology, of the skill with which their experience and analogical reasoning have enabled them to build up the form of an extinct animal from such slight links as a tooth and a footmark. If we turn from England, and step across the Atlantic, we shall find similar phenomena under similar circumstances. In Connecticut state is a series of new red sandstone rocks, lying in a depression of older granitic rocks, of an area of more than 150 miles in length, and in thickness exceeding 1000 feet. The labyrinthodon is not the only animal that has left his tracks behind him there; there are also marks of birds, lizards, &c. Professor Hitchcock, the American geologist, has distinctly traced the footprints of thirty species of birds, five of lizards, two of the chelonia or tortoise tribe, and six of the batrachians; and as Sir Charles Lyell tells us, the impressions have been found over a space of eighty miles. This district must have been, therefore, a grand rendezvous, or, as it was on a shore, we may call it a fashionable watering-place for these extinct gentry. The steps of the birds are of all sizes, but almost all betokening the same character of the foot—that is, having three toes, and possessing the same number of joints as are found in living birds of this class.

The size of the stride which the bird would take, as ascertained from the distances between each impression, is strictly in proportion to the size of the footmarks. The large dimensions that these birds must have attained, far exceeding that of the ostrich, staggered the naturalists, who could scarcely believe that they *were* birds; but the subsequent discovery of fossil bones and skeletons of birds, now extinct, in Australia, such as the dinornis, quite dispose of that objection. Mixed up with all these footprints are also those of the labyrinthodon, and another species called the rhynchosaurus, which, in its skeleton, was something between a bird and a tortoise.

We will now leave the triassic formation, and see what is to be found in the Permian strata, which come next in order. Permian or magnesian limestone was so named, by Sir R. Murchison, from the kingdom of Perm in Russia, which is principally formed of those rocks, and consists of series of marls, clays, and conglomerates, more or less coloured; and besides these, of a large amount of limestone, which is characterised by the presence of magnesia, and is termed dolomite. It possesses some very characteristic fossils, more allied to those of the coal-measures than any of the formations above; but it is not so largely developed as the new red sandstone, although many beds which were formerly put down as triassic are now placed in the Permian division.

In Annandale in Dumfries-shire, is the large Permian quarry of Corncockle Muir, belonging to Sir W. Jardine, and many large footprints have been found here; one in particular, named the 'Chelichnys Titan,' is the impression left by a gigantic tortoise, which must have been larger than a hippopotamus. In some instances, too, there is evidence of the creature having lifted his foot up and put it down again clogged with the mud and sand that clung to it. In the coal formation, again, which lies below the Permian, are the footsteps of an animal allied to the cheirotherium, although hitherto it has only been remarked in Pennsylvania. They are not actually in the coal, but in the sandstones which are interpolated between the coal-measures; and although similar, they are not exactly of the same species as the reptiles of the triassic period, for the toes are almost all of the same size, and there is not the marked difference between the hind and foremost foot. In the layers of rock, too, between the coal-measures at Beaufort, in the South Wales coal-field, have been noticed small impressions, probably of some crustaceans.

In the next great division, the old red sandstone, there are a few animal foot-tracks. I have in my collection a slab of old red (in age, my readers must remember, long prior to the new red) from a quarry at Puddlestone, near Leominster in Herefordshire, upon which there is a well-marked ripple, and the footprints of a crustacean which walked along the beach. It is evident, from the size and the close position of the impressions, that it must have been a very small creature, which progressed very slowly. Let not my readers fancy that fossil footprints are common in any formation; their rarity makes them the more valuable, and often have the theories which have taken years to mature been upset at once by the discovery of one little bit of evidence like this. I have not in this paper touched upon any other fossil markings—such as impressions of annelids—for these could scarcely be included under the head of Footprints; but I trust that my readers will at once recognise the wonderful amount of study and patient perseverance that has enabled the world to read in the history of the past, not only the general characteristics, but also the minutiæ of the former tenants of the globe.

OUR MAJOR'S SPOON.

I DID not steal it, gentle reader; he gave it to me himself. It was one evening after mess some hours; indeed, it was nearly ten o'clock, when several members of the ward-room of H.M.S. *Blunderbore* were seated round the table discussing their liquid night-caps before retiring to their virtuous couches. Our major (of the 101st, then on board) was one, as also was your humble servant, who will explain how it came about that you are now put in possession of our major's spoon. First, however, let me introduce the major himself.

He was of the middle height, and of a portly figure—portly, but not absolutely podgy. The major had work in him, and was as good for a long forced march, with a row at the end of it, as any officer ten years younger than himself. Still, he was stout, and his figure had an increasing tendency towards the form of the great globe. In countenance he was open, expansive, cheerful, friendly, rubicund. I do not speak of the 'chiseling' of his nose, because port-wine and other creature comforts had somewhat unchiseled it; and, moreover, our major was often heard to assert that he 'would only like to see the man that could chisel *him!*' I mention his eyes, because they were gray and merry; and his hair and astonishing whiskers, because they were luxuriant and fiery, and ferociously good-humoured.

In short, our major was a good major, and he loved Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspeare, Izaak Walton, Walter Scott, and Whisky Toddy. He was a pleasant major at all times; but while leisurely sipping his third tumbler, he was a companion for the gods—at least for the respectable ones, if there are any.

At the time of which I speak, the major was at his second tumbler; and, he being apparently a little thoughtful, conversation had flagged. At length, feeling the silence irksome, I rose to go, when I was stopped by his saying: 'Hold on, Peter; don't go yet. If you'll stop, I'll give you one of my spoons.'

What he meant by giving me one of his spoons, I could not imagine; but having entire faith in him, I straightway reseated myself, and at a sign from him, replenished my glass. The offer of one of the spoons was received by the others with much clapping of hands and knocking of tumblers on the table, though what they could have to do with a spoon that was offered to me personally, I could not divine.

While the major was scientifically compounding his third and final tumbler, I occupied myself with vain attempts at guessing what these spoons could really be. Could they be *bonâ-fide* plain metal spoons? No. He was not rich, nor I poor enough for such gifts as gold or silver to pass between us, and the major had a soul above pewter or Britannia metal. Perhaps they were some curious old carved apostle spoons which he was going to shew, not give us. Perhaps——

'The first occasion,' began the major, 'on which I had the misfortune to get spooney'——

'Oh, that's it, is it? I see now.'

'Then, Peter, shut thy mouth, and thou shalt hear as well as see;' and here followed the history of our major's first spoon.

'The first occasion on which I had the misfortune to get spooney was on this wise. I had been but a few months in the service, and was young, inflammable, and ardent. That I was formed in every way a fit object for the tender passion, you yourselves can see without the help of spectacles; that, in this instance, I was a most unfortunate subject of it, you yourselves shall hear, if my emotion at the recollection will allow me to proceed with the tale of my sorrows.

'I had been appointed to the *Staghound*, 46, a fine frigate, as we thought in those days, but scarcely fit to be a jolly-boat to those they are building now. Small, however, though she was, there was room enough in her for the expansion of much good feeling, and we were what is called a happy ship. The skipper was a plain, sensible man, very different from the common run of boobies, who fancy that every thing and man on board the ship is there for the sole purpose of swelling their own special pomp and dignity, and are always in dread lest they should knock out some of the stars with their numskulls. He liked to see the duty well done, and had sense enough to know that work done "with a will," as the old saying goes, is sure to be well done. Knowing this, he laid his plans to make officers and men as comfortable as the circumstances would permit. It would be tedious and useless to say how he set about it—how the stupid old Admiralty counterblast to tobacco was put by on a shelf to be taken care of, while smoking was allowed at all hours; how every comfort and convenience obtainable was at once put in requisition; and how every indulgence was granted, so that the duty was first well provided for. Suffice it, that the skipper's efforts, ably seconded by the officers as soon as they saw his aim, were crowned with triumphant success; and we arrived on our station, at the mouth of the Fraser River, in the Oregon territory, with the ship, officers, and ship's company, all in the very best of health and spirits.

'It was a glorious place. We had contrived to get the ship over the bar, and were lying about two miles up, surrounded on all sides by forest-clad hills and grassy valleys. Not far from us was a fort belonging to the Hudson Bay Company, to the officers of which the herds of half-wild horses that pastured in the valleys belonged. The woods teemed with game, and the water with fish; so that we never wanted a day's sport, nor a delicious addition to the dinner-table.

'For some time I gave myself up to a sporting-life. The officers of the Company had kindly given us leave and assistance to catch and break as many horses as we pleased, and I, with a couple of smart nags—on which my servant attended as groom—my gun, and my rod, with an occasional excursion into the land of poesy, was as happy as the day was long'——

'Got any of your poems now, major?' interrupted the paymaster. 'I should say you would beat Byron into fits. I had a messmate once who was a grand poet. Here are two of his lines—

Let's hurl these despots from their glittering thrones,
And make 'em eat unutterable bones.

Fine—isn't it? He repudiated the last line, and accused us of sticking it in; but that, you know, was only his modesty.'

'I sent the poems to a magazine; but the editor had no soul, and I have reason to believe he lit his pipe with them.'

'Ah, that shews there was fire in them, at any rate,' said the paymaster.

'Oh, shut up, Brooks, and let the major go on with his yarn,' exclaimed one of the audience.

'Well, to proceed,' continued the major. 'Many of our fellows used to visit at the fort; but I, being of a bashful and retiring nature, contented myself with smoking one cigar with the inhabitants, and then returned to my former amusements. I had become accustomed to the absence of ladies' society from necessity, and should have gone on happily and prosperously until we left the place, had it not been for one unlucky day, and one deceitful purser.

'The niece of the commanding-officer had lately arrived at the fort, and taken all hearts by storm. A blue-eyed, cherry-lipped, peach-cheeked, dimple-faced damsel of seventeen, whose clustering bright brown curls half hid'——

'Go it, major,' interrupted the paymaster; 'that's your sort. Gushing creature!'

The major gave him a look which ought to have turned him into stone, and then continued his narration.

'The purser and I were the first favourites with the young lady, and the rest were nowhere. I could come on shore oftener than he could, and, taking advantage of this, I was most assiduous in my attentions. I danced with her, I walked with her, I sang with her, I read poetry with her, and I began to *teach her drawing*. All went smoothly as a marriage-bell. The perfidious purser had scarcely the ghost of a chance; and I felt sure that the sight of me in my full uniform, when she came off to church, one Sunday, had completely finished the business. But (Ah—h—h!) "Man proposes, and Providence disposes." Let me hasten to a conclusion (Oh—h—h—h!) before my feelings get the better of me.

'A picnic-party had been got up, mainly through my exertions. We mustered about fifteen, including Miss Edwardson. The scene of our rural felicity was to be a small grassy glade in the thick forest, just where a fine headlong trout-stream came dashing down into the bay—about as delightful a spot as can well be imagined; and right merrily did we enjoy ourselves. Among the crowd of admirers that surrounded her (there were always eight or ten), Miss Edwardson distinguished none but me. The purser looked at me savagely—at her, dismally; and despite his natural buoyancy of spirits, was either silent, or spoke in monosyllables. As I observed his spirits declining, so did mine rise, until at last I had become quite the lion of the party. My wit sparkled under the approving eyes of that sweet girl; and as the wine passed round after our dinner, beside that glorious stream, I kept the table, or rather the tablecloth, in a roar; or, as the humour seized me, I got them into a sentimental mood, and set them thinking of their absent loves.

'We got to singing. The purser sang a song, the refrain of which was, "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." Ah—h—h! I remember it but too well. Many other fellows sang; and when it came, I gave them a beautiful little thing I had composed for the occasion, beginning—

O no! we never mention her;
She's lovely—she's sublime! &c.

Only I could not manage to keep out of *Ben Backstay* and *Cease, rude Boreas*, into which two songs I was constantly tumbling, owing to a defective, or, perhaps, a too retentive memory, assisted by sundry glasses of champagne, which I had taken to get my courage up to the popping-point. At last Miss Edwardson was prevailed upon to favour us, and she was getting on delightfully with *Love on, love on*, occasionally sending me up to the seventh heaven by a tender glance in the strong passages, when she suddenly broke off and exclaimed:

"Oh, oh! Oh, the darling! the love! Oh, the sweet pet! the beautiful creature! Oh, the little beauty!"

'She was either looking at me or over my shoulder. For a moment I really was ass enough to believe that her passion for me had turned her brain; but seeing Williams rise from the grass rather hastily, and observing that he was intently regarding some object behind my back as I reclined beside my charming lady-love, I looked round, and there saw the cause of her exclamations. It was a beautiful little animal of the ermine species—at least so I thought, though its coat was pure white, and it had no black tip to its bushy tail. The impudent little wretch looked at us for a minute, and took it so easy that I began to think it must have been some escaped pet; and when Ellen sang out again: "Oh, Mr Guthrie—oh, see how tame it is!—oh, do catch it for me, please—oh, do!" I rose at once to do so. At the same moment, all the others rose. I saw that perfidious purser sign to them, and thought they were coming to assist. I did not notice till afterwards that they had all retreated in an opposite direction.

'The little beast had taken up his station at the foot of a grand old tree. His stern was turned towards us, and he was quietly and complacently surveying us over his shoulder. I made a run at him, and my hand was nearly on him, when—— Ah me! the remembrance of my reception by that abominable animal I shall never forget. The love, the darling, the pet, the beautiful little creature, was neither more nor less than a SKUNK! I was almost suffocated, I was entirely beside myself with rage. I fell down, I yelled, I rolled in the grass, I rubbed the skin off my face. I held my nose, but the terrible effluvium got in at my mouth; I shut my mouth, and it rushed in at my nose. I screamed for help, and one or two of the less-experienced of our party came running down towards me; but no sooner had they got within fifty yards, than, simultaneously gripping their noses, they ran as if the Old Gentleman was after them. I rushed after the party myself, still vainly holding my nose; but no sooner did I approach, than they turned and ran as if for the bare life.

'I was intolerable to myself. The dreadful perfume nearly maddened me. All my rubbing and scrubbing only took the skin off, without giving me any relief. I tore off my coat and waistcoat, and rushed into the stream. There was a steep fall close at hand; and there, under the dashing water, with just my nose and mouth out to get air, I sat. I dared not move out. Only when covered with water was existence tolerable.

'I had been there some time, when I heard a voice hailing. It was the purser's, and he was evidently holding his nose.

"Hi, Tommy, where are you?"

"Here," I answered in a most doleful tone—"here, under the water-fall."

"That was a skunk you tried to catch," he called out, keeping a respectful distance, and still holding his nose.

"Don't I know it, you confounded booby!"

"Oh, I thought you might like to know the creature's name, in case you should ever fall in with another. Pretty little things, ain't they? Can I do anything for you?"

"No," I replied savagely. "I'm going on board."

"On board!" exclaimed Williams. "Why, man, you'd clear the ship. Nothing can live within fifty yards of you, nor won't be able to for a fortnight to come. You don't know how strong you are."

"Don't I, though!" I thought, feeling at the same time that I was strong enough, in another sense, to give him a good thrashing, if I could only get out; but that was hopeless.

"How queer you look there, under glancing water—quite like a jolly old river-god. Well, look here. You can't go on board; you had better walk round the head of the bay until you come to a half-ruined hut which is there. There you will have to stay for a fortnight or three weeks; and if you keep in the water all the time, you will probably have ceased to be aromatic. At present, you know, you are dreadful. I'll send you round clean clothes, grub, liquor, and any other necessaries. Good-bye; take care of yourself. You'll have a very quiet life; I almost envy you. Good-bye."

'I am almost sure I heard him stifling a laugh. Could I have proved it, this world should not have held us both much longer.

'Three mortal weeks did I exist, a miserable outcast, in that wretched hut. At the end of the second week, a messenger, holding his nose, presented me with a small packet. On opening it, I found it to contain a small portion of cake, and two cards tied together with white ribbon. On the small one was the name "Mr Williams, R.N.;" and on the larger one, "Mrs Williams." My happiness was blasted for ever! I vowed from that time forth never, never more to love.

'Good-night; it's time for all reasonable people to be in bed,' said the major, suddenly changing his tone from a sentimental whine to his natural voice. 'Go to bed, then; and if you are good boys, I'll give you another spoon some other night.'

SILENT TEACHINGS.

While overhead the rain-drops softly fell,
The sun sank slowly to his golden nest,
And myriad-tinted cloudlets seemed to tell
His gayest hues o'erspread the glowing west.
Sunshine and cloud so strangely mingled were,
That each made each appear more passing fair.

Far in the east—first like a snowy shroud
Preparing to enwrap the dying day,
Rose slowly in the heavens, a single cloud
With gradual darkening, till upon it lay
A mantle bright, of iris colours, spread
By setting sun and rain-drops overhead.

Only a fragment, yet how fair to view
The rainbow hues that decked the darkening sky;
While, as the gathering clouds the closer grew,
Each glorious tint assumed a deeper dye,
Till by a perfect arch the heavens were spanned;
A radiant coronet from God's own hand.

A lesson to my soul ye all have taught,
Rainbow and cloud, cool rain and glowing west;
Ye gave me comfort, when I little thought
Unspoken words could bid my spirit rest.
Gems of the sky! all silent though ye be,
A precious message have you brought to me.

Ye said: 'Not only must the sunbeam shine
Upon the gentle rain-drops as they fall,
But gathering clouds must with the twain combine:
The rainbow owes its being to them all.
Man's trials are but clouds, and, through his tears,
God's mercy like a glowing sun appears.

'Whom our God loves, He chastens—clouds may come;
Trials may meet him in this world of care;
Yet are they sent to bring him nearer home:
God makes him fit for heaven, then takes him there.
As by each darkening cloud the bow is shewn,
So, trials conquered, help to gem *his* crown.'

Last eve I prayed, 'Lord, take my clouds away;'
Now pray I, 'Lord, if needful, let them stay.'

R. B.

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THEIR REJECTED CONTRIBUTORS.

We happen to have the advantage of the acquaintance of an editor of a London periodical, devoted, like our own to Literature, Science, and Arts; and he has favoured us with the following account of his Rejected Contributors. We do not apologise for this brief prefatory statement, since we would wish to avoid an imputation which must otherwise have arisen (and it must be confessed, not without some shadow of probability), that they were *our own* rejected contributors whom we were making a pleasant little paper about. The conduct of Saturn in devouring his own progeny, would, indeed, compared to such an unnatural proceeding, be paternal and exemplary. Nay, in our opinion, the crime could have no parallel, except in the case—a purely hypothetical one, of course—of a young lady making public all the offers which she has received from love-sick man, and to which she has returned a negative. Fortunately, however, our editorial friend does not seem to be dowered with the same delicate feelings upon this matter, since he begins his extremely interesting communication with a sarcasm.

'A very great number of our rejected contributors have long been ardently desirous of getting into print, and an opportunity is now afforded of their being gratified. As our own columns have been hitherto closed to them for various reasons, which we have communicated by private letter, and as they seem to find insuperable obstacles in other channels likewise, their present appearance in this journal will doubtless be a charming surprise. A. Z., for instance, good, persevering young fellow, your indomitable assiduity in posting manuscripts is rewarded at last. Do you think we do not know the whole list of periodical letter-boxes, the long muster-roll of magazine editors, whom those creased and inky papers of yours have visited in vain before they came to us? Or when, as often happens, we get them first of all, white as new-fallen snow, and neatly sewn together at the corners, do you imagine that we give credit to that complimentary threat of yours, that if our critical eye looks coldly on them, you will, out of respect to it, consign the rejected manuscript to the flames? Nay, nay; we do remember the time when we were ourselves contributors, and are well aware by personal experience how unalterable will be your own opinion of its merits, and what a noble contempt for us, your inadequate judges, you feel in the inmost depths of your youthful soul.

'With B. Y. we have even a greater sympathy, for she is a lady-correspondent, charming in every way, we are certain, and intellectual to a fault; while the ingenuousness with which she sends in her papers with the names of the offices of other journals scored all over them, like post-marks, and indicating all their journeyings as surely, is captivating indeed. How could we tell her, except in this indirect manner, that we do not consider more than one quotation from the French to be admissible in every three sentences of English, and that whole pages clean out of Mr Addison's *Spectator*—and without any acknowledgment of the little plagiarism—are not quite what we or our readers desire.

'What a legion of lady-correspondents, by the by, we have! Four females for every male at the very least, and—dare we confess it?—notwithstanding that disproportion, not more accepted manuscripts from the one sex than from the other!

'And as we have begun upon statistics, it may here be stated that seven out of eight, perhaps, of all manuscripts are rejected; while one out of eighteen, or so, hangs, like Mohammed's coffin, between the heaven of acceptance on the one hand, and the *hellus articulorum*, the box of rejection, upon the other.

'Ninety-nine hundredths of the poetry—a thing we do not profess to return to its inspired owners—goes (not to speak without reverence) incontinently into the waste-basket at our feet. O Apollo, what metres we do get! What rhymes! What reams of blankest verse!—good for nothing but to make into paper-pillows for the insane. What first acts of never-to-be-completed tragedies! What torsos of epics! What Lines to Blank! What elegies! Nobody who is not an editor would believe what subjects will incite persons to write verse who have that weakness in their system, nor how very mild a form the unhappy distemper can assume! We have the neatest little pink manuscript in our possession at this moment, with filigree cardboard binding, and the following taking title: "Elegy upon a Puce-coloured Cat (pet of the authoress), which was drowned while angling for gudgeon, a fish of which it was particularly fond." Conceive one hundred and forty verses upon this thrilling event stereotyped in our well-known periodical, and exported to the ends of the earth!

'We mistrust all elegantly got-up communications. Some literary gentleman, who perhaps could not express his own ideas very legibly, has set the idea afloat that no man of genius can write so as to be read—that is to say, except by printers' devils, who can read all author-type with ease, from the bold red-hot poker Roman, down to the *chiaro-skewero* Italian, or shower-of-rain style; and it is true enough that a neat handwriting does not very often accompany good matter; but then, be it remembered, a man may write something exceedingly difficult to be deciphered, which is not necessarily worth the investigation after all; and to say truth, our very worst contributors are perhaps our very worst writers also. They dash off—they are kind enough to put us on our guard by saying so—they "dash off a few hurried thoughts in a leisure half-hour, which they hope and believe will be found very well adapted to our columns." Their thoughts would give us far more trouble to properly express than they gave them in the thinking, while the arrangement of them is about as varied and as well linked together as a child's daisy-chain. We much regret that there is no punishment for these offenders more severe than that of ordinary rejection.

'Next to these, for bad composition and inelegant style, are they who, on the contrary, embellish their papers with feats of pencraft; who depict a beautiful black eagle at the commencement of their high-flying communication, and a spilt ink-bottle, or other allegorical and pictorial finis, at the end. These persons may be good lithographers, draughtsmen, or civil engineers, perhaps; but the idea which they entertain of their being able to write literary papers is a mere monomania. Their brains are in their hands; their knowledge is at their finger-ends, but nowhere else. What is it to us that the most elaborate flourishes adorn each paragraph, and that the initial letters of their every chapter are a triumph of skilful penmanship? What is it to the reading public, who—our magazine not being an illustrated one—are never even aware of the fact?

'Many of our contributors rest their claims to insertion upon grounds even less reasonable than these pictorial ones. One has no better reason for it than that his article "has been lately refused by a *six-shilling* quarterly;" another, than that he, the writer, is a magistrate and a deputy-lieutenant of his county! A very large class request, nay, demand, acceptance for what they allow to be very indifferent literature, on account of their youth; another, on account of their poverty. It is, allege the former, their first attempt in literature; we are quite at liberty to do what we please in the way of alteration; money, even, is not so much their object—"although, of course, *some* remuneration will be expected, since the labourer is worthy of his hire," &c., &c.—as publication, and, eventually, fame. They have no doubt in their own minds of obtaining this last, for "they have long felt a something within them which seemed to say 'Forward;'" and instead of consulting, as they should have done, their medical adviser upon such an unpleasant phenomenon, they write to us. We have been ever remarkable—they are so kind as to say—for a distinguished courtesy, and for extending the hand of fellowship to dawning genius; and they therefore trustingly consign their first-born—which is not generally a very little one—to our fostering hands. We shall find in it, they believe, some sparks of genius, some gleams of humour, some outbursts of natural passion, not unworthy, perhaps, of names better known than theirs. Our attention is especially directed to the fourteenth line of the second page of the seventh chapter, and after, where Melienda defies the treacherous Rudolph: if it does not remind us of Shakspeare, they shall be, they confess, somewhat disappointed. They may be prejudiced, but the scene does certainly cause their own mind to revert involuntarily to that author. Finally, their address is, for the present, Post-office; through which, of course—and it is astonishing how keenly alive to the practical these young geniuses are—money-orders can be conveniently communicated.

'The subject of our poor contributors is a painful one. We are unable to persuade them that poverty, of itself, does not necessarily make them good writers; and that, though it may be the characteristic, more or less, of many good authors, it is not the sole characteristic; that we had far rather send them money out of our own pockets than ruin our periodical by the insertion of third-rate matter; that such a course would, indeed—if they contemplate writing for us in future—be fatal to themselves, as killing their goose to obtain a single golden egg. For the most part, this reasoning is quite thrown away upon our poor contributor, and seems to him hard measure cruelly paid. Nevertheless, we have much power, for good or ill, in our hands with regard to these two last classes, and woe be to us if we abuse it, or, which is almost as bad, if we fail to use it.

'When we ourselves were younger than at present, and not We at all, but Contributors, we have experienced editorial kindnesses such as were balm to our wounded spirit. The encouraging voice, the liberal hand, the valuable and gracefully offered suggestion, the kindly eyes reading our inmost thoughts from afar off, so well—we have known all these, not once only and in the same person, but oftentimes and in several. This profession of ours is sadly belied by the great army of rejected contributors; for not every one of us can deny with that grace which robs the disappointment of its sting. There are, it must be confessed, some editors who are simply abominable—*Wes* who it is quite as well should remain for ever anonymous; fellows who keep the stamps, and never send back the articles. We hear terrible things about them sometimes from our confidential contributors; those, for the most part, who have been admitted *once* into our columns, and are the most grateful and affectionate of all. C. X. writes to us: "The editor of the *Postage Stamp* [new illustrated magazine, just started in opposition to ours] is, I am afraid, an unmitigated snob; he has kept two very long papers of mine—which I begged him in the most moving terms to send back if he did not want them—for nearly three months, although I enclosed the stamps for their transmission. I have written four gentlemanly letters to him, each requesting the favour of just one line in reply; but the creature has never taken the slightest notice of them. What do you advise me to do with such a fellow as this?—*P.S.* I hope, by the by, that he is not a personal friend of your own!" C. X., acting upon our advice, wrote to the proprietors of the *Postage Stamp* next time, instead of to the editor, and got his papers at once. The We in this instance could not have had a very nice sense of editorial obligation, but such examples in the case of respectable periodicals, we are persuaded, are altogether exceptional.

'Again, this non-return of manuscript is almost the only form of annoyance editors can indulge in, while contributors, be it remembered, have each a quiver full of obnoxious weapons at their free disposal. In the first place, a very large number of them are perpetually grating upon our feelings with their allusions to pecuniary compensation. One would have hoped that persons of literary pursuits, and even in most cases worshippers of the immortal Muse, would evince some delicacy in this matter, or, at all events, not be rudely importunate; whereas, unhappily, the very contrary is the case.

'It would seem as though a large portion of our rejected contributors had been accepted in other places, so far as publication was concerned, but that that had been their sole reward. "We understand," they write, "that you give pecuniary remuneration;" a phrase which has the appearance of being a "feeler," and implies that they rather expected we didn't. Some of the bolder sort offer us their valuable services "upon the usual terms," or "at your usual rate of remuneration;" they are even willing to become regular contributors, "if our scale of payment be such as they have been accustomed to;" by which expression they imagine that they have delicately hinted that in thus offering their assistance, they are prepared to suspend their daily contributions to the leading articles of the *Times*.

'Our sensibilities are subject to severe shocks from the slavish rejected contributor in one direction, and from the insolent rejected contributor in another: the former absolutely goes down upon all-fours, degrades himself to the level of the beasts, so far as literary style will permit him, and grovels at our editorial feet in hopes that we will be moved thereby to insert his papers. He well knows, he says, that his works are worthless, and his ideas contemptible; still, if we would only be so good as to print them, it would be so very nice and comfortable. Sometimes, when he has obtained possession of our name, he professes to be intimately acquainted with our published writings, and will quote from them in his letters with a suspicious frequency; or he has scraped acquaintance with our second-cousin's aunt by marriage, and pressing that circumstance upon our notice, as though it conferred on him the rights of blood-relationship, insists upon all the advantages of nepotism. The fervour with which this species of contributor inquires after our health could scarcely be exceeded if he were in receipt —which is by no means the case—of an annuity dependent upon our own life.

'Our insolent contributor is, after his peculiar fashion, scarcely less objectionable: he sends a short paper, which he cannot think we shall be so foolish as to decline, upon the wonders of the sea-shore; he was induced to do so through reading one upon the same subject (we wrote it ourselves) in our last month's number, which he thought inadequate and stupid; or, he transmits us a circular map of the country ten miles around Bullock Smithy—his dwelling-place—which he requests us to lithograph and put in our magazine, as being a scientific novelty, and of the greatest public importance; or he brings a heavy bundle of manuscript *in propriâ personâ* to our office, and announces his intention of waiting there until we shall have pronounced a favourable verdict upon the performance; or he sends us a duplicate of something that he has already sent to another periodical, and apologises for the confusion that ensues in consequence, upon the ground that "nobody could have expected that we should have *both* accepted it;" or, he cunningly varies the beginnings of the said article, and, ostrich-like, imagines that he has thus escaped discovery, while the identical tail of the story appears in a rival journal, coincidently, or—still worse—appears there first, and in our own afterwards; or, professing originality, he translates *verbatim* from the German, and protests upon his word and honour, that the thing is but an accidental coincidence, and that the same idea—in seven chapters—must have occurred to himself and to the Teutonic author independently.

'The slavish contributor, as may be expected, not unfrequently assumes the insolent form. Goaded to madness by the continuous rejection of his papers, he throws off upon a sudden his ill-fitting mask of humility, and indulges, with a vengeance, in the most natural and unrestrained expressions. He gives us what he is pleased to term "a piece of his mind;" and we must say, judging from that specimen, that we do not think highly of the remainder. A bard who had sent us again and again the most terrible trash, with a shilling volume of published crudities as well, was for months a humble suppliant at the editorial shrine; when suddenly he changed his tender appeal to passionate diatribe, and accused us of not only being fools, but knaves. "At least," said he, "you might have returned my little volume, or enclosed the dozen stamps which represent—in your miserable commercial sense, that is—its value."

'On another occasion, an individual represented to us that he possessed the highest genius, but had failed as yet in getting any recognition of it; that he was poor, and had others dependent upon him. We therefore promised to do our best to serve him, in revising his performances. He sent us about four hundredweight of manuscript, and we spent an entire day in endeavouring to discover one grain of merit in all that mountain of chaff. Failing in this, we wrote him a kind, but firm expostulatory letter, regretting our inability to help him, and pointing out that literature was the last path in the world which he ought to follow, since it must needs lead him, without the possibility of escape, to disappointment and sheer loss. By return of post, we received a furious invective, protesting against our arrogance and presumption, and perorating with as neat a posy of abusive and outrageous epithets as could be culled in Billingsgate Garden.

'We are in the continual receipt of the most paternal advice, ourselves, with regard to the conduct of our magazine. We have been denominated in the same week ribald and exemplary; been warned against unseemly levity, and adjured to mix a little more lightness with our—doubtless, correct—information. Once or twice a pastoral communication has been received, entreating us to pay more attention to the health of our—the editorial—soul.

'Letters are now and then addressed to us which bear, even on their envelopes, specimens of the nature of the sad stuff within; blasphemous remarks enough to make the postman shudder are distributed outside like franks, and are supposed, we think, by the maniac who writes them—since he never prepays it—to take his communication free. The contents of these are generally a scheme for some new religion, or a project for running locomotives to the moon, often printed in three or four languages, and addressed magniloquently to all nations upon the terrestrial globe. The promoters of these blessings to civilisation adjure us, in bad grammar and worse spelling, to use our editorial efforts in their favour, threatening, if we refuse their spiritual commands, to consign us to Gehenna; if their temporal, to take an early opportunity of "potting" us with a revolver that has never yet missed its aim. At first, we were a good deal alarmed by this kind of missive, and were wont to take considerable draughts at that sherry which we keep in the literary pigeon-hole devoted to "Miscellanies," whenever we heard any strange step upon the office stairs; but we have been long convinced that these lunatic persons have all a very sane and healthy dread of the police.

'We have a much greater horror of another class of contributor, who is, unhappily, not always a rejected one; these will sometimes send us a most amusing and striking account of the supposititious inhabitants of an imaginary town, with fictitious parson, lawyer, doctor, and their mythic female relatives complete; an epitome of life, most naturally imagined and described; when, lo and behold! after we have published it, we find the town to have a very real existence indeed, and to possess a matter-of-fact post-office, through which the most indignant epistles from flesh and blood, "alive and kicking" personages, flow ceaselessly for weeks.

'Or, worse still, some *cause célèbre* is transmitted to us, dug to all appearance out of the law-mines of the past, but furbished and tricked out ingeniously so as to possess a present interest; which narrative has no sooner made its appearance in our columns than we receive an intimation from some unknown injured party, that we have striven to prejudice a case about to be brought before a law-court, have thereby subjected ourselves to an action for libel, and are requested to name our solicitor.

'Such cases as these, however, occur but rarely; or, at all events, our pleasures more than compensate us for our pains. Our editorial life, it cannot be denied, is upon the whole an easy one. The unavoidable enmities which we incur with unreasonable people, are but few; the friendships which we make are many, and of the pleasantest sort, born, as they are, of interchange of kindly feeling, and based upon common sympathies and tastes.

'Our accepted contributors, by whom the fame and glory of our periodical is maintained and defended, are drawn from every rank and condition of man (and woman); and so are our rejected contributors.

'The professed *littérateurs* have, poor fellows, all the world for their rivals. Next to them, clergymen are certainly our most prolific contributors, and they write upon every subject under heaven, as well, of course, upon heaven itself, as it is their duty to do.

'Then comes the great array of briefless barristers; the host of doctors in inextensive practice; with a fair battalion of military, and a smaller squadron of nautical men: the intelligent mechanic class is perhaps the next numerous. Then, but in far less numbers, persons of a very humble means, with an interesting life-experience, who can rarely give us more than a single paper; and who, encouraged by the success of their first attempt, become, chronically, rejected contributors: the penultimate class of correspondents—numerically speaking—is that of government officials; and the last of all is the aristocracy.

'Nevertheless, a countess supplies us with the most exquisite verses that we can get, one other of our authoresses alone excepted—who is a washerwoman. A nobleman gives us as lively descriptions of foreign travel as we can possibly obtain, and is only rivalled by another contributor who has had a still longer alien experience—as a compulsory resident in Van Diemen's Land. Among such different phases of society, it would be strange, indeed, if we did not make acquaintances who ripen into friends, to whom the We is dropped, and the editor is lost in the man. We are thankful to say that such has been the case with us in many instances. Nay, we have often met with the most patient forbearance, and the very gentlest treatment, even from our rejected contributors themselves. To one, who, after a very downy letter from us returning an article, sent us an invitation to his box for the shooting-season, we take this opportunity of publicly expressing the sense we entertain, not merely of his hospitality, but his magnanimity. To a whole class, in all sincerity, we publicly declare, as we have often affirmed privately, that it pains us to return their papers far more than it grieves them to receive them; and that we not only wish them well, but wish them—them and their papers, so that they be Rejected Contributors no more—far, far *better*.'

Thus far the London editor. What different experience might we of the Metropolis of the North reveal—did we think it consistent with our dignity! But is it for us to speak of the hampers of wine, the baskets of game, the wedges of wedding-cake, the twenty-pound notes to be used at our discretion for charitable purposes! Why, *our* rejected contributors, while any hope at all remains to them, are meat and drink and—— But what are we saying? We have done—or rather the London Editor has done his worst. There is nothing to add except a postscript, referring to a private transaction, which does not concern the general reader:

X.Y. is informed that the madeira is come to hand quite safely. The manuscript is unavoidably returned.

HERBS—THE TRUTH ABOUT THEM.

Cultivation is driving away many of our favourite wild flowering-plants—a result to be regretted, for more than poetical reasons, by those who still cherish the faith of the old herbalists. For some long time past, this faith in medicinal herbs has suffered decay; but lately seems to have revived, at least in certain places. Remnants of the old creed may still be found in the herbalists' shops in several towns. We have noticed them especially in Derby and Manchester; and in the cottages of the poor, it is not uncommon to find, beside the *Pilgrim's Progress*, a copy of twaddling old Culpepper's *Herbal*. We shall not endeavour to defend a faith that must pass away, or to screen lowly herbs of supposed medicinal powers from the cruel scrutiny of modern science. It is to be feared that such medicines as tansy, yarrow, and agrimony will have but a poor chance when tried against quinine. But censure and scepticism have often been indiscriminate, and doubt, like belief, has often arisen from ignorance. An examination of the supposed virtues of several of our indigenous plants might not only lead to some good practical results, but would also be serviceable as a good exercise of cautious scientific inquiry.

We may invite the attention of readers to a few of our own observations, on the ground that we shall copy nothing from books, and that we shall write in English, laying aside all long botanical terms—in several instances, longer than the plants described. We shall tell only what we have tried, observed, or heard from good witnesses of the virtues of herbs. We have confirmed our own preference for souchong by drinking the tea brewed from ground-ivy, sweet woodruff, wood-betony, and many other plants recommended by old Gerharde and Culpepper. We know too well the acerbities of centaury, wormwood, and bogbean, and in many other instances are able to give lessons derived from 'bitter experience.' We have eaten dandelion salads and meat dressed with savoury, and unsavoury, wild pot-herbs. More than this, we have made experiments on the poisons, and have tried the virtues of hemlock, two sorts of nightshade—the black and the woody—the berries of the white and the black briony, and the pungent root of the wild arum, or 'wake-robin.' On these grounds, we claim the privilege of giving a little advice to all who care to know more than the colours of our flowers of the field. Our first dose of advice must be—never laugh at ignorance until you understand it. There is often a kernel of fact under the shell of a crude theory. Nothing can be easier than to explain the reputation once attained by many of our harmless, or slightly medicinal herbs. Go back to the time when these lowly plants—such as docks and scurvy-grass—first acquired their fame. Four hundred years ago—and the medicinal use of our field-flowers is probably as old—the rustic people of England were by no means ill fed. They had plenty of salt-beef and pork, with stock-fish for Lent—stock-fish, but no parsnips; boiled salt-beef, but no greens. At Christmas, they revelled in brawn and mince-pies; but even in summer, they had no cabbages, nor potatoes. They had plenty of strong ale, and loved it so well as to give it thirty or forty endearing names; but they had neither tea, nor coffee, nor cocoa. This was a strong and salty diet, and no doubt had a scorbutic tendency—hence the reputation of so many lowly herbs. To a gourmand who had plenty of salt-beef and pork, but was destitute of cabbage, any harmless green plant, such as our wild mustard or 'cherlock,' would certainly be salutary. Then, naturally enough, the general virtues of fresh herbs, taken in such circumstances, were mistaken for special; and hence the reputation of such plants as our common dock, the burdock, and the butterbur—the last-named frequently used in time of the plague.

Again, in many slight cases of indisposition, what are our most certain means of cure? Next to fresh air and exercise, with light diet and the bath, we may name mild laxative or diaphoretic medicines; and these may certainly be found among our indigenous plants. It is highly probable that when a working-man, who has suffered from exposure to cold, lies by a day or two, and rests and promotes perspiration by drinking 'balm-tea,' he will find the benefit of such a simple course of treatment. Instead of the 'balm,' several other herbs might be substituted with the same effect, or he may drink a mixture of congou and souchong, if he can get it. 'If he can get it!' a comfortable reader may exclaim—'surely every Englishman can get a cup of tea.' O no! Our botanical rambles have made us acquainted with the fact, that even in fertile districts there are labourers who scarcely know the taste of tea. 'I drink balm-tea,' said a lank, bony man with whom we talked not long ago—'and it is very rarely that my wife has a taste of shop-tea.' The spread of gardening has superseded the use of wild pot-herbs, and even in rural districts there are probably few who could safely gather them. On only one occasion have we seen and tasted a dinner of meat served with wild pot-herbs—'sauce-alone' and 'cherlock,' both belonging to the mustard tribe—the former tasting rather like garlic, the latter (the plant that makes cornfields yellow) not unpleasant when tender. To borrow old Culpepper's style, you may use these pot-herbs with singular benefit, when you can get no cabbages.

Enough has been said to explain the general virtues ascribed to our native plants. In writing of their special virtues, we regret the necessity of hurting the reputation so long enjoyed by many an old acquaintance. First, we may mention a few harmless plants of uncertain medicinal power, and then notice a few of our more potent British herbs.

Everybody can recognise the lip-shaped flowers of mint and lavender. These fragrant plants are well-known types of a numerous tribe dwelling in our fields and woods, all having a considerable family likeness in their qualities, as well as in their aspects. All are harmless; several are pleasant, both to taste and smell. They are generally diaphoretic; that is to say, promote perspiration, when taken as tea. In these few words we condense volumes of the laudation bestowed by old herbalists on many members of the tribe now under notice. There is, for example, one lowly, hardy little fellow, who runs on the ground all the year through, save in mid-winter, and may be easily known by his rounded leaves and bluish-purple flowers, with a not unpleasant scent. This is the 'ground-ivy,' or 'Gill-go-by-ground;' but as an old favourite, he has many other names, such as 'alehoof,' 'catsfoot,' and 'turnhoof.' In old times, this plant was used to flavour ale. It was commonly sold in the streets of London, and ought to be now, if a tithe of the praise bestowed upon it be true; for 'it wonderfully cheereth the heart, and driveth away melancholy.' In one respect it resembles the great medicinal agents, air, light, and water—it may be found almost everywhere. Let the dyspeptic, long in the populous city pent, take no pills, but walk to Hampstead or Highgate, or, turning south, to Lewisham and Brockley, and gather ground-ivy. The walk will do him good, and 'Gill-go-by-ground' will do him no harm. That is all we can safely say, after drinking several pints of British souchong, having ground-ivy as a basis. A similar verdict must be passed on its relatives, 'wood-betony,' the 'bugle,' 'clary,' and 'calamint.'

To pass to another well-known tribe, very serviceable in the kitchen. We subscribe to the praise bestowed on 'hedge-mustard' and 'sauce-alone,' as medicines for a cough. The 'cherlock,' already mentioned, is a wholesome pot-herb. Our common mustard and cress, water-cresses and brooklime, belong to this tribe, of which no specimen is poisonous, while several are very wholesome. It is worth knowing that, wherever you find a flower like a single wall-flower, or like the flower of the turnip, made of four petals and with six stamens—two opposite shorter than the others—the plant is wholesome, though it may be unpleasant. A knowledge of this little fact would have enabled seamen on long voyages to find on many islands, wild but wholesome greens, to qualify their salt junk.

To leave the mustard tribe. The wild rose that makes our hedges gay is the type of many British plants having slight astringent properties, but by no means worthy of all the praises bestowed on them as medicinal agents. We are sorry to hurt the character of a lowly and rather fragrant herb, but experience warrants us in saying that 'agrimony' is little better than a sham as a cure for the gout. It is still believed in by gipsies and many rustic people.

In terms of higher respect we may speak of more positive agents, such as our English bitters—the centaury, the bogbean, and wormwood. That is an alpine species of wormwood, of which the stomachic liqueur, *absinthe*, is made. Our own plant has not such a pleasant bitter.

Everybody knows the dandelion, and has seen marigolds—if only in mutton-broth. These common flowers are types of a very numerous family of plants, all bearing compound flowers, consisting of many flowerets set on a disk, and all having a considerable family likeness in their properties. Their taste is commonly warm and bitter, as may be instanced in tansy and chamomile. The butterbur, belonging to this tribe, grows commonly on the banks of rivers, and has a larger leaf than any other English plant, excepting the cultivated rhubarb. It was used—and probably with some good effect—as an external application in the time of the plague, and is strongly recommended by the old herbalists as a 'great strengthener of the heart and clearer of the vital spirits.' Like the coltsfoot, it puts forth its flowers some time before its leaves appear. We can say nothing of its merits. Another well-known plant of the same family is the burdock, growing commonly on roadsides, where it stays as if loving the dusty highway; for we have often seen it skirting a road, yet never straying to better soil in the field beyond the hedge. It is the plant from which boys pluck the burs that stick so well to the traveller's coat. We have known a rustic medical botanist who used no other remedy than a strong decoction of the burdock. 'One glass,' said he, 'is tonic; two are diaphoretic; three, emetic; and four'—we forget what four would do. We tried it, and found it nauseously bitter, with no better effects than might have followed a dose of chamomile tea.

To turn to plants of more formidable qualities. The nightshades have an alarming name, and are regarded with great suspicion, mainly owing to the very bad character of one member of the family—the deadly nightshade or *belladonna*. This is the plant possessing the property of causing a fixed dilation of the pupil of the eye, and for this reason it is employed in surgery. Very few persons have ever seen the belladonna, marked by its bell-shaped flowers and jet-black berries, like small cherries. The plant commonly mistaken for deadly nightshade is, in fact, the woody nightshade, or 'bitter-sweet,' very commonly found trailing along the hedges in many localities. Its flowers are dark blue or purple, with a prominent centre of bright yellow. Though we would caution the inquirer against tampering with any nightshade, it is only fair to say that our own experiments with this species have by no means convinced us that it is noxious. The black nightshade common in neglected gardens, ought to be well known, as children might eat its berries. The leaf may be popularly described as like that of the alder; and the white flowers, of four small petals, with a yellow centre, are followed by pendulous green berries. We have known a case of frequent eating of these berries without any bad result; but let this fact lead to no rash experiment. Describing this plant, old Culpepper for once writes sensibly. 'Have a care,' says he, 'you mistake not the deadly nightshade for this; if you know it not, you may let them both alone, and you will take no harm.'

Two of our most common poisonous plants are the brionies, white and black—the white belonging to the gourd tribe; the black, our only English representative of the yam. The roots of both are so large and sappy that we might wish, in a time of potato-failure, they could be made edible; but this, we fear, is a far-off result of culture, though we have great faith in its power over plants in some degree poisonous. As the result of our experiments on the two brionies—or rather of their experiments upon us—we must say again, with Culpepper, 'you may let them both alone, and you will take no harm.' With great suspicion and caution, every student who would extend our knowledge of medical botany must approach all plants having their flower-stalks arranged as the stretchers of an umbrella. Of this extensive order—very difficult to be known thoroughly—the hemlock is the most notable type. We have tried it, but will say no more of it than that it is a valuable medicine when employed by skilful hands. A solitary plant, having no British relatives, is the arum or 'cuckoo-pint,' well known to children as 'lords and ladies.' It appears early in the spring, with very glossy dark-green leaves, and its root, about the size of a small potato, contains a nutritive starch mixed with the volatile acrid juice that makes the whole plant poisonous. Tragus, an old herbalist, coolly recommends you to take, occasionally, a dram of the fresh root; but we earnestly say, do nothing of the kind. The effect of a mere taste on the mouth and throat is something like Cayenne pepper mixed with strong ammonia, and a fair quantity of fine needles. Yet, when the acrid juice is dried away, we can make a wholesome biscuit of the starch in the root. We must pass undescribed the beautiful foxglove and all the lowlier plants of its tribe, and must leave under a general suspicion all the flowers really like buttercups—that is, having the same arrangement of petals and stamens; but it is fair to say that while so many plants in our fields and hedgerows are labelled noxious, a more dangerous plant, of the buttercup tribe, holds a respectable position in society with roses and geraniums in our gardens. This is the terrible monkshood, without question the most acrid and dangerous of all our British plants. We would advise all who grow flowers and esculent vegetables in the same garden to extirpate this flower, easily known by its uppermost petal of lurid blue, brought over the lower petals in the shape of a cowl or helmet.

The result of all our experience must fail to please the enthusiastic amateur herbalist; for we divide British plants, with regard to their medicinal properties, into two classes—the first, harmless, and almost or quite useless; the second, potent and dangerous. Our harmless friends must not be trusted in any case of serious illness, and their powerful neighbours are too violent to be handled by amateur practitioners. We trust, therefore, the tendency of this paper will be to destroy the popular faith in Culpepper and his school. A little has been said in favour of the several tribes represented by the well-known herbs, mint, wild mustard, and wormwood; while, on the other side, we have pointed out the dangerous tribes instanced in the nightshades, the brionies, arum, hemlock, and foxglove. Here our medical British botany ends.

But if we cannot encourage the student to go in search of medicines into the woods and on the hills, still let him go, and he may find something better than medicine—the art of living without it. And the study of our wild-flowers may be commended, not only as wholesome exercise, but as an admirable training of correct observation and memory. Our first duty, with regard to mental culture, is to observe and know the facts around us. After this we may imagine more than we know—that is poetry; and lastly, we may endeavour to find general rules under which all our knowledge may be reduced—that is philosophy. Now, too many young minds begin and end with imagination; and for these the study of any science is a good discipline, while botany may be especially commended; for while it will sharpen their talents for observation, it will by no means depress any true poetical powers they may possess. On the contrary, the study of our wild-flowers, and of the soils and localities where they grow, may supply true and lively imagery to the poet and the painter. Of all our poets, how few have proved themselves true observers of nature! With regard to their treatment of the flowers of the field, we can mention with special commendation only three—how unlike in other respects!—Clare; Crabbe, who gives so well the flora of the oozy salt-marshes; and Tennyson, who notices how 'witch-elms' counterchange the floor of a lawn 'with dusk and bright,' who speaks of 'blasts that blow the poplar white,' and, in short, always gives proof of a keen observation of air and sky, and woods and meadows. To turn to the painters, the flowers of the field have many complaints to make. Why should a painter of English landscape trouble himself to invent some fantastic climbing-plant, when we have, ready made for him, such a beauty as the lusty, black briony, rampant in our hedges? What can be more beautiful than its intense green glossy leaves in summer, or its hanging clusters of bright ruddy coral, mingled with green berries, among the feathers of the clematis in autumn? Go to the woods and hedges, painters! Without a word to depreciate the ideal, surely the real is one element even in the highest art; and when the real is beautiful, let it be truly copied. We have no patience with the designers of unreal patterns that make our papered walls and our draperies ridiculous with all kinds of impossible and nonsensical plants that never were and never will be created, while the living beauties of our woodlands are neglected. We have seen groups of gipsies in many paintings, but rarely or never have we seen a gipsy encampment under a true English hedge, painted in all its summer luxuriance. We will venture to say that such queries as, 'What plants are most commonly found by a hedge in one of our midland limestone counties?' or, 'What are the characteristic flowers found, in June, in a ravine of the mountain limestone—in Yorkshire, for example?' would puzzle too many of our landscape-painters. Hence we find, in sunny, luxuriant meadows—of the painter's world—flowers and leaves that rather love the dusk side of the wood or the cleft of the rock. Or if we find such a charming flower as the small centaury, truly located in some woodland glade, it is probable that all its pink blossoms are as wide-awake as daisies, while the sky is so cloudy, that the light-loving flower would, in fact, never open its petals at such a time; or we find, in the same world of dreams, luxuriant trees growing on rounded, chalky downs, where they do not grow; or streams rippling in hollows and valleys of the chalk, where dryness and short grass would be characteristic; or grand scars and chasms in rocks of a structure not liable to such fissures; or growing beside rifted gray rocks that would indicate 'the great scar limestone,' fine elms and poplars that should rather be flourishing on our midland clays and limestones, beside the lazily winding Ouse, with all its white water-lilies. All these errors might be corrected by an occasional botanical ramble.

Having said enough to abate the ancient reputation of wild-flowers, regarded as medicinal agents, we would gladly make amends by recommending them to all who love beauty. We believe, with the herbalists, that many of their simples will 'expel melancholy'—a disease that seems to have been very prevalent in old Gerharde's times; but we differ as to the *modus operandi*. Go find them; learn to recognise them, draw and paint them. This will be better than using them in the form of an electuary or decoction. Not long ago, we were talking with a rural herbalist—a little withered old man, with a boundless faith in the virtues of 'mugwort' and 'the melancholy thistle.' We had expressed our doubts of such remedies for the spleen and the headache. 'If these herbs are not good for man,' said he, 'why were they made?' 'They were made to be studied and painted,' said we, leaving the profound disciple of Culpepper astonished by our simple and childlike creed.

A few words more to end this gossip. Let us appease the fears of the tyro who has opened a botanical book, and has been frightened by some such word as *monochlamydeæ*. A fair knowledge of our wild plants may be had without remembering all the hard long names so incongruously married to pretty flowers. Let not the tyro imagine that every flower with its long label must be learned separately. You find a lowly plant—the cuckoo-flower, or ladies' smock, of four petals and six stamens (the tiny threads or filaments in the centre)—of the latter, two opposite each other are shorter than the rest. This is a type of the tribe called, in plain English, cross-shaped, on account of the arrangement of the four petals. Now, to remember this may seem trouble enough for the sake of an introduction to one little flower with blushing white petals; but—mark this, tyro—you have already learned to recognise not only the cuckoo-flower that blows in May, but also a whole numerous and very important tribe of plants distributed over the world. And, in a few words more, you may learn something of their properties. They are all in some degree like mustard and water-cresses—all harmless, though often pungent to the taste, in many instances medicinal, and supplying, by culture, not a few of our best esculent vegetables. Is not this a rapid mode of learning? You can already gather safely a wild salad in any part of the world. Now, to use long words, this is a first lesson, short and easy enough, in 'descriptive, medical, and economical botany.' Will you take another? Then pull a buttercup. Count its petals—the yellow varnished leaflets that make the flower—and mark the arrangement of the sepals—the green leaflets just under the petals. Notice now the numerous stamens rising from the disk or centre. You may suspect as poisonous, though pretty, every flower made like that buttercup. But you may say with some reason, 'the apple-blossom is in several respects, though not in colour, like the buttercup and the anemone.' Yes; but notice again that the numerous stamens of the buttercup rise from the centre or disk. To prove it, pull away all the other parts of the flower. You have left the stamens all standing. Now try to do that with the apple-blossom, or with any flower really like the apple-blossom. You cannot. Thus easily you have learned to make a clear distinction between two extensive orders of plants—one poisonous, while the other supplies apples, pears, and innumerable wholesome and delicious fruits. This, it must be confessed, is a rapid way of learning botany; and instances of such facility might be multiplied. You may easily acquire, during a summer afternoon's ramble, the names and chief characteristics of a dozen or more plants of the mint tribe, for example. Then be no longer contented to look with a vague, unintelligent eye on the flowers of the field, or to call the distinct beauties of a hundred old families all by one name—weeds. Surely there is some meaning in the faithful plants that, century after century, while our garden-flowers come and go like our fashions, return with every spring and summer, and change not while empires pass away. They belong to the great system of life of which we are but parts, and they contribute to and share in the welfare and the glory of the whole. As a German poet says:

> Over the thirsting blade of grass
> Hang the dark rain-clouds, and the rivers flow,
> Yea—to refresh it—seas their billows roll.

So from prosaic old Culpepper, with all his sirups and decoctions 'to purge melancholy,' we have wandered to poetry, of which the dry old herbalist never dreamed; and this may warn us that we have rambled, for the present, far enough among the flowers of the field.

POUDRE ROSÉ.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

III.

Towards evening on the same day, and whilst Adrienne was still in a manner stunned by the suddenness and magnitude of the event which had changed the aspect of her life, she received a message from the Abbé Morlaix, requesting to see her immediately, and alone. She obeyed the summons, and divined its meaning the moment she was in the abbé's presence. He wore his priest's stole; and a velvet cushion had been placed beside his chair. 'I have sent for you, Adrienne Beaudésert,' said he, 'on this day in which He, in whose hands are the issues of life and death, has visited this house with such sudden judgment, in the hope, the confidence, that at such a solemn moment you will not refuse or delay to lay bare your whole heart to God.'

The abbé's words and tone wounded the susceptibility of the young girl, who, with the *hauteur* inspired by conscious purity and innocence, answered that she had no present intention of placing herself under Monsieur l'Abbé Morlaix's spiritual superintendence. The abbé was enraged beyond all bounds by such a reply, and in the first movement of his anger, gave partial vent to the dreadful suspicions that had arisen in his mind. Mademoiselle Beaudésert only appeared to comprehend in his angry, menacing language and reproach, that she rejoiced at the death of Madame de Vautpré; and even that was too much for her shaken strength; and again losing consciousness, as in the morning, she would have fallen on the floor but for the dismayed and bewildered abbé. Directly assistance came, M. Morlaix left the room, and soon afterwards the château, to seek counsel as to what course, under the circumstances, he was bound to pursue.

Whatever that counsel may have been, remained unknown to those whom it must have chiefly concerned, since it was not, visibly at least, developed in action. The routine of the château went on as usual; and on the appointed day, the corpse of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré was borne in state to the vaults of the Church of the Assumption, to be laid by the side of that of her nephew. The funeral display was yet more splendid—the catafalque more gorgeously emblematic of the dignity that lay rotting beneath its imposing upholstery, the crowd more dense, the oration more effective than on the former occasion; albeit the essentials of the show were identically the same in both cases: the same catafalque, only more splendidly bedizened; the same crowd in larger numbers; the same oration from the same text, 'Whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him;' skilfully amplified to include certain special admonitions, which found their way to at least one conscience, if it might be fairly so inferred from the convulsive sobbing of, ostensibly, the chief mourner amongst that throng of seeming mourners! The spectators whispered to each other that Mademoiselle Beaudésert was more violently affected than at her father's funeral; and some others of the more observing sort noticed that Jules Delpech, present with his son Paul, was again recognised by Madame de Vautpré's grand-niece, as she left the church; but this time with a start, shudder, a crimson suffusion of face and neck, rendered more striking by the instantly recurring paleness. What might that mean, coupled with the flashing looks interchanged by the father and son? A question that which Adrienne Beaudésert herself could not have answered, had she chosen to do so, except by saying, that since the death of Madame de Vautpré, immediately after drinking the chocolate in which poudre rosé had been mixed, the idea of the men who had provided her with the unholy drug—it was Paul Delpech who was in waiting for her with the sealed packet at the second interview, Mademoiselle Beaudésert being accompanied by Lisette Meudon—had been associated in her mind with images of death and sin! Lisette Meudon could have given a more plausible solution of the seeming mystery—namely, the conflict in mademoiselle's mind of pride and high station, with the suggestions of a romantic attachment to handsome Paul Delpech; and Lisette, a young woman of strong feeling, though lax in principle, would not have hesitated to give up the money recompense she was to receive of the Delpechs, were not her marriage with the amiable son of miserly old Simonet dependent thereon, if she might thereby have assisted in breaking the ignoble fetters in which a vagrant fancy, helped by cunning arts, had bound her gentle-minded mistress. But, alas! Lisette Meudon, keen and wary as she deemed herself, had been as fatally duped by those cunning arts as Adrienne Beaudésert herself. So at least confidently calculated the two Delpechs.

The death-rites duly celebrated, the affairs of life regained regard and prominence; and it was found that the large possessions of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré were secured to Adrienne Beaudésert, clogged by one condition only, that whosoever she married was to assume the name of Beaudésert; and it was also provided that during Adrienne's minority, Cardinal Retz and the Abbé Morlaix were to have a certain control over her expenditure—M. Morlaix to reside of right during that period at the Château d'Em, and to receive for life the same *honoraires* as had been paid him by the testatrix. The instruments by which the property was thus devolved had been executed only about three months previously.

The brilliant future that had so long eluded the grasp and mocked the hopes of Madame Beaudésert was at last more than realised, to her exuberant delight, unbounded exultation; and it was not very long before the dark, fitful fancies that haunted the imagination of mademoiselle, her daughter, were chased away, or superseded by the excitement attendant upon the novel and dazzling position to which Madame la Baronne's death had raised her. The Abbé Morlaix, who kept himself very secluded, rarely interfered with the management of affairs; and Adrienne, with her prouder, more elated mother and sister, seemed never weary in realising to themselves, in a thousand ways, the intoxicating possession of riches, power, social supremacy. It was the acted fable, so far, of *the beggar on horseback*, with the catastrophe of the dizzying ride to come.

After three months' enjoyment of home splendours, however, *ennui* began to arise, and a lengthened tour was projected by the ladies, through Switzerland and Italy.

During those three months, the Delpechs had made no demonstration whatever. The father's timidity of temperament had operated to suspend the blow, the possible recoil of which might bring about his own destruction. *Might*—yes; but not if his brain retained its mastering, guiding power. After all, nothing *could* be wanting to insure success, but *l'audace, et encore de l'audace.*

'*Sacre bleu*—yes; we know that very well,' sullenly exclaimed Paul, who had heard that soliloquy, or one very like it, a hundred times before; 'but when the moment of action arrives, your heart is to be found in your shoes, if anywhere. It was worth while, truly, to venture so far, only to stop short when the prize was in sight—within hand-clutch, as you well know! Not long to remain so,' added the young man bitterly, 'for it is quite certain the Beaudéserts leave France for one, perhaps two years; but whether one or two, mademoiselle will not return, we may fully assure ourselves, says Lisette Meudon—the confiding simpleton she is, or, more correctly, has been.'

'You have seen Lisette Meudon?'

'I *have* seen Lisette Meudon, who, through me, returns the three Napoleons you once *lent* her, with her compliments, and a polite intimation that, for the future, she must decline the honour of our acquaintance.'

'The insolent baggage!'

'That polite and peremptory intimation,' continued Paul, 'did not prevent her from condoling with me upon the sad blight to my hopes caused by the discovery that Mademoiselle Beaudésert cares no more for my fascinating self than for any other of the country clods upon which the light of her countenance may have occasionally fallen.'

'And what, pray, may be the meaning of all that insolence?'

'The meaning is plain enough: la demoiselle Meudon, thanks to the powerful interposition of her mistress, will be Madame Claude Simonet in a day or two; elevated, therefore, above our position in life—and, *cent diables!* that is true, too,' added Paul Delpech, with an explosion of savage temper.

'True! Surely, Paul'——

'True—yes, certainly it is true,' interrupted the son, with a heat inflamed by the liquor he had been drinking, 'but it shall not be for long. Hear, now, my unalterable resolve, if you please, sir. Having striven so far, having sunk so deep, I at least will not hesitate at the final leap or plunge; and since you will not evoke the power you have acquired over Adrienne Beaudésert, I will do so myself; and but a few hours shall have passed before that young lady is made to thoroughly understand that the sole choice left her is between marriage with Paul Delpech, and public exposure, followed by shameful death!'

'You would fail, Paul—utterly fail,' trembled from the ashen lips of Jules Delpech. 'I—I, since you are so resolved, will set about the—the business at once—by letter first—obscure, preparatory hints, awakening preludes to the else overwhelming thunderburst. Don't you think it will be best so, Paul?'

'As you please; only, if possible, get rid of your coward fears. A bold, determined throw *must* win; but a shaking hand will lose both fortune and fair lady, skilfully as the dice have been loaded.'

Thus urged, Jules Delpech managed to screw his courage to the sticking-place; and Mademoiselle Beaudésert, whilst busied with preparations for the impending journey, was surprised and startled at receiving several brief notes—not disrespectfully phrased, but indirectly menacing in tone, subscribed D. 'D!' thought Adrienne—a child disporting itself in a parterre of gorgeous flowers, from amidst which a serpent suddenly uprears its flaming crest, delaying only to strike—'D! that must mean Delpech. What can *he* require of me? What shall I do?'

It was difficult to say. Lisette was unfortunately absent—just set off upon a wedding-trip to her relatives in Paris; and after considerable hesitation, arising from an unacknowledged dread lest the vague, shadowy terrors which the letters had excited in her own mind, should, were those letters submitted to the clearer, stronger vision of others, assume tangible shape and substance, Adrienne Beaudésert determined upon shewing them to her mother and sister.

'How absurdly nervous you are, Adrienne,' said Madame Beaudésert, after running them over. 'The man of whom you, silly goose, obtained that precious poudre rosé, wants to be handsomely paid for his nostrum; but, from a wholesome dread of the law, does not choose to distinctly specify the nature of his demand. *Voilà tout, chère fille.*'

'I hope so,' said Adrienne, only partly reassured; 'and yet, would that Lisette were here; she should go and conclude the affair at once.' Madame Beaudésert remarked that Lisette would be back again in quite sufficient time to attend to such a bagatelle; and changed the conversation to other topics.

Not, unhappy maiden, not to be so concluded even by clever and zealous Lisette, as the following note, received the next day, too plainly shewed: 'Mademoiselle Beaudésert, I have already sent you three letters, which, though only signed by the initial letter of my surname, must have been perfectly intelligible to you, requesting an interview at an address enclosed. Has the elevation to which mademoiselle has been so suddenly raised, *precisely eight days after her interesting conference with me, seven after that with my son*, turned her brain, blinding her to the fatal consequences of a refusal to reward, in the only manner reward is possible, the love, the devotion—at what cost evinced Mademoiselle Beaudésert too well knows—of that son? I demand, then, for the last time, a strictly private interview with Mademoiselle Beaudésert, to take place within the next twenty-four hours.—JULES DELPECH.'

'What, *maman*—what mean those wild looks, this pale face?' gasped Adrienne, as her mother, having glanced over the letter, stood transfixed as by the stroke of a dagger. 'Speak, or I'——

'My child—my precious innocent child,' interrupted the mother, clasping, straining Adrienne in her embrace, with terrified, convulsive tenderness; 'I see it, understand it all now. The villain of whom you had the—the poudre rosé, means, O God!—means to assert that you—you, beloved Adrienne—you, sweet, sinless child—knowingly obtained—obtained, under the pretence of poudre rosé, a drug of him to—to—— O Father in heaven, can such things be?'

'What things?' exclaimed Clarisse. 'Speak, mother. You are killing Adrienne.'

'That—that Adrienne obtained a drug of him—to —to shorten the life of Madame de Vautpré.'

With those words, the flame-crested serpent leaped at Adrienne's throat, and life for a time forsook her. It was long before the distracted mother and sister could recall her to consciousness, and to what consciousness, when successful? What else but this, that she, Adrienne Beaudésert, was the murderess of her relative and benefactress—in fact, though not, blessed be God, in purpose—that she held her life, and (minor, but still bitter consequence), the splendid position which had so lifted her up with pride, at the mercy of a miscreant whose forbearance could only be purchased, it seemed, by the abhorred pollution of a marriage. But no; she would die a thousand deaths first!

For all this, however, before the expiration of the stipulated twenty-four hours, a message reached Delpech to the effect that Mademoiselle Beaudésert wished to see him early in the forenoon of the morrow at the Château d'Em.

The hoary-headed conspirator did not fail to attend at the time appointed, sprucely attired, and prepared with a number of carefully conned phrases in deprecation of the outburst of wrathful terror with which he expected to be assailed if the young lady or her mother had fathomed, and he could hardly believe they had *not* fathomed, the true purport of his menacing letters. 'But the first flash of the tempest over,' argued Jules Delpech, 'the stern necessity of the'——

The current of his thoughts was checked, and he himself staggered back in dismay from before the apparition, as it were, of Adrienne Beaudésert, who, with her face the colour of the loose white morning robe she wore, her hair in disorder, her eyes flaming with insane excitement, came swiftly towards him from a door which silently closed after her, grasped his arm, and whilst perusing his countenance with intensest scrutiny, said, in low, rapid, earnest accents:

'I have consented to see you, sir, not to defy, to curse you—human maledictions could not reach fiend-nature such as yours—but to say this: your object in inventing the horrible lie!—yes, lie, lie, lie! with which you have sought to stab my life, is, must be, money. Well, confess that it *is* a lie; give me proof, easy for you, that it is one; proof that Madame de Vautpré died—as she *did* die—a natural death, and I will secure to you the half of all I possess! The half, did I say? All, all, will I give in exchange for unstained life—in redemption of my else lost soul!'

Adrienne's voice ceased, not so the fierce inquisition of her eyes; and Jules Delpech, amazed and shaken by the wild distraction of her speech and aspect, could with difficulty stammer out, in low, husky under-tones, that Mademoiselle's own words betrayed a knowledge complete as his own—though not so much as hinted at in his letters of—of—the cause of Madame de Vautpré's death—of what the pretended poudre rosé really was.

As these words, slowly distilling from the man's poison-lips, fell upon Adrienne's ear, her erect, rigid form seemed to collapse, and presently tossing her arms distractedly in the air, she turned away with a scream of terror, made as if to flee from Delpech's presence, and was received in the embrace of her mother, who, with Clarisse, had been a trembling listener close without the door. Delpech, quite satisfied with his progress so far, now hastened to be gone, first, however, muttering to Madame Beaudésert, that such violence and agitation were absurd, uncalled for, as the profoundest secrecy would of course be observed—at all events, till a definite understanding was arrived at; and that there was not perhaps one great family in all France whose private archives, if brought to light, would not reveal secrets of a similar kind.

Mademoiselle Beaudésert did not leave her bed for many days after this; and Delpech's negotiation with the wretched family at the château—M. Morlaix, as it happened, was, fortunately or unfortunately, absent in Paris—was carried on through her mother.

The substantive position of the two parties, the Delpechs and Beaudéserts, was set forth by Jules Delpech at those interviews, with a quiet coolness, derived from the poor lady's panic-fears, that looked courageous, bold-faced ruffianism.

Madame Beaudésert has since frequently declared, that whilst listening to Delpech's atrocious talk, she felt as in the actual presence of a fiend from the bottomless pit, specially commissioned to achieve the perdition, body and soul, of herself and children! Once or twice, indeed, the thought, piercing with momentary light the thick darkness, glanced across her mind, that it was surely impossible a man, however reckless, who had really committed the dread crime of murder, could speak of it with that calm cynicism, prate so glibly of the awful penalty he by his own shewing—if that shewing were true—had primarily incurred. But how to act upon that blessed hope? Write to already deeply prejudiced M. Morlaix, entreating his immediate return, and, upon his arrival, take counsel of his judgment, his knowledge of the ways of men, and, all too late, find Delpech's assertions confirmed! Impossible—utterly impossible to incur that tremendous risk—to desperately stake character, life, the innocent life of her child, upon that fearful issue!

Finally, for the suggestions of unreasoning fear prevailed, and Adrienne Beaudésert was at last subdued—terrorised into consenting to a compromise, by which it was settled that the civil and legally binding form of marriage was to be gone through by her and Paul Delpech—the blessing of the Church, unessential to the validity of the contract, she would not ask for such constrained, unnatural vows—immediately after which, and in accordance with the provisions of a solemn instrument subscribed and attested beforehand, the nominal wife and husband were to separate and remain strangers to each other for ever. Adrienne—till such time as arrangements could be made, without attracting too much public attention, for her seclusion for life in a convent—to inhabit with her relatives one wing of the château—the Delpechs the other; and the disposition of the property was settled by the same document, which Jules Delpech drew up in imposing wordy form. It was formally executed, and the civil marriage, it was agreed, should take place on that day s'ennight.

In the meantime, it had been industriously set about, that the seclusion of Mademoiselle Beaudésert, the anxiety and consternation observable in the demeanour of her mother and sister, were caused by the thwarted but obstinate determination of the young lady to wed one so far beneath her in station as Paul Delpech, with whom, it was asserted, she had all along been upon terms of secret lover-intimacy—one note addressed by her to the young man, appointing a private interview, had been seen by Madame Sabin, a most respectable person, well acquainted with her handwriting; and her impulsive, affectionate recognition of the elder Delpech amidst the crowd in the Church of the Assumption at her father's funeral, was cited as corroborative proof, if any were wanting, of the early, deep-rooted attachment which had gained strength and intensity with every day of her life! Scarcely anything else would, one may be sure, be talked of or written about by the gossips in the vicinage of the Château d'Em; and it thus fell out that Madame Claude Simonet, or Lisette, as I may continue to call her, heard, in Paris, of the astounding marriage on the very day the same intelligence reached M. Morlaix; the immediate result being, that Lisette and her husband and the abbé met a few hours afterwards at the bureau of the Lyon diligence, and were fellow, and exceedingly communicative, passengers during the journey homewards.

Instantly upon reaching the Château d'Em, M. Morlaix demanded an audience of Mademoiselle Beaudésert. It was peremptorily refused, in accordance with an understanding come to with the Delpechs; and the half-demented abbé could only extract from Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert that Adrienne was determined upon the marriage, and would not suffer herself to be importuned upon the subject. M. Morlaix had next recourse to the lawyers, with equally disheartening result—the mother's consent, he was informed, being quite sufficient authorisation of her daughter's marriage, however opposed to it the trustees of the De Vautpré property during Mademoiselle Beaudésert's nonage might be. Lisette was equally, and from the same cause, unsuccessful in her efforts to obtain speech of her former mistress, and much more ferociously enraged thereat. But what to the purpose could be effected even by her sharp eyes and sharper tongue? she not knowing, not being able even to guess at the true motives prompting Mademoiselle Beaudésert's consent to such a marriage. She, however, quickly undeceived good Madame Sabin, wife of the medical gentleman who attended Madame de Vautpré in her last illness, as to the note supposed to have been addressed to Paul Delpech by Adrienne Beaudésert, confessing with shame and ceaseless iteration, that that was her own scheming handiwork. Lisette, moreover, loudly proclaimed her determination to be present, *plait à Dieu*, at the Hôtel de Ville, and have some conversation with mademoiselle before the abominable ceremony was proceeded with.

The affair wore the same menacing aspect on the afternoon of the day preceding that which was to witness the successful consummation of the Delpech conspiracy. It was the month of September, and growing so dark that Adrienne Beaudésert, still prostrate as well in body as in mind, could no longer read the *accord* that, as already stated, had been drawn up and signed by the contracting parties, and which she had been perusing and reperusing, in order to more completely satisfy herself that its clauses had been so plainly framed that there could be no after-denial of their true purport and meaning. Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert were present; and the latter, more by way of breaking the silence by saying something, than influenced by any serious apprehension, said:

'I suppose, dear Adrienne, that the condition of immediate separation conceded and subscribed to by those tiger-hearted Delpechs can, if necessary, be legally enforced?'

Lightning seemed to leap at the remark from Adrienne's darkened heavy eyes, and she glared at Clarisse as if the words had stabbed her. Mastering herself, she turned and hid her face in the pillows of the couch upon which she was reclining, was soon apparently asleep, and Madame Beaudésert withdrew with Clarisse upon tiptoe. They were no sooner gone, than Adrienne started up, made her way quietly to the library, selected a Lyon directory, made a memorandum with her pencil, and then ringing the bell, desired the answering servant to have a close carriage in waiting at the back entrance to the château within ten minutes.

'La Rue St Martin, Numéro 19—do you know it? The residence of M. l'Avocat Dufresne?' said Mademoiselle Beaudésert, in answer to the questioning bow of the coachman; and was immediately driven off.

M. l'Avocat Dufresne's new and interesting client was so thickly veiled and muffled up that, had she been personally known to him, he would have failed to recognise her, as she placed a heavy fee upon the table, and in a low trembling voice recited the conditions of the signed accord, suppressing names of course, and asked if such a pre-contract could be enforced against the possible opposition of the husband.

'Certainly not, mademoiselle. An accord stipulating that a husband shall not be a husband, is not worth the ink consumed in writing it out. That is, no doubt, very well known to some, at least, of the parties that have subscribed such a document.'

'Thank you, monsieur; that is all I require to know.'

Adrienne's mind was made up from that moment, nor did she feel the slightest irresolution as to the course she would follow, lead her whithersoever it might; to a shameful death, there could be little doubt, for the baffled Delpechs would in their rage be sure to persist in accusing her of criminal complicity in their dreadful crime; and circumstances would, it was useless to attempt concealing from herself, give colour and coherence to all they said. For all that, she would, and she exulted to think it was still possible to say she would now do her duty, leaving the result to God.'

Adrienne sat up late that night, busily occupied in writing; slept soundly the first time for many days; and rising with the dawn, sent her packet of papers, Delpech's letters included, to the Abbé Morlaix. The three ladies breakfasted as usual in Adrienne's chamber; and Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert were both struck—shocked, almost, by the cheerfulness visible in the aspect of the supposed bride, on that the hated, dreaded, marriage morning! Little, however, was said, and that little not relating to the matter pressing exclusively upon their minds, till a message was brought, announcing that the Messieurs Delpech were arrived, and waiting in the *grand salon.* It had been arranged, I should state, with the municipal authorities, that, in consideration of Mademoiselle Beaudésert's delicate state of health, the marriage formalities should be gone through at the château.

. Madame Beaudésert and Clarisse, white, trembling in every limb with terror and horror, obeyed the implied summons; Adrienne promising to follow almost immediately. They found the two Delpechs, as stated, in the grand salon, both evidently in a state of great nervous excitement—the father more especially; and a moment after their own entrance, the Abbé Morlaix, with Lisette and her husband, came in from a further door. No sooner did Jules Delpech perceive the last comers, than, surprised out of all self-control, he made for the door by which he had entered, with the apparent purpose of escaping from the place, but found, to his thereby greatly increased consternation, that it was locked on the outside! 'What can all this mean?' gleamed from his flurried eyes, and stood out in large drops upon his forehead, as he again, perforce, fronted the company, now increased by the silent entrance of Adrienne Beaudésert, who, pale, calm, lustrous as Parian marble, took a seat between her agitated mother and sister. It was difficult to interpret the expression of Lisette's flushed features, but that of the abbé's naturally stern countenance was unmistakably grave, earnest, solemn.

'What is the purport of all this dumb show?' exclaimed the younger Delpech, assuming with some success a front of defiance. 'Where are the municipal officials? A priest is not required at these espousals!'

'There will be no espousals,' replied the abbé, 'between you, Paul Delpech, and Adrienne Beaudésert, now or hereafter.'

'Ha! Does, then, Mademoiselle Beaudésert dare—dare, I say, refuse to ratify her promise?'

'Yes; she dares refuse—*does* refuse to do so, at the peril, you know, of her life. I know all, and from her.'

This announcement elicited cries of terror and dismay from Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert; Paul Delpech champed a bitter malediction, and his fear-mastered father again distractedly essayed to open the door, close to which he had remained standing. Adrienne alone was calm, unmoved; but as for Lisette, she was only kept from instant and violent interference by a forbidding gesture from the abbé, and her husband's eager remonstrance: 'Doucement—doucement, bonne femme; thy turn will come presently, never fear!'

'It appears,' resumed M. Morlaix, 'from the papers I hold in my hand, that you, Jules and Paul Delpech, accuse Adrienne Beaudésert of having obtained of you a poisonous drug, named, for the occasion, poudre rosé, by which she destroyed the life of her aged relative, Madame de Vautpré. Is that so?'

'First, Monsieur l'Abbé,' exclaimed Paul Delpech, whose natural audacity was sustained by drink, early as it was, 'tell us by what right or authority you presume to ask such insolent questions?'

'I ask them in order to ascertain, before invoking justice, whether the horrible tale is or is not an invention.'

'We shall say nothing,' hastily interposed Delpech senior, forestalling his son's reply. He fancied the abbé was desirous of hushing up the matter after, if possible, relieving Mademoiselle Beaudésert's conscience of the burden that oppressed it. This thought gave him momentary courage.

'Are you aware that the punishment of the galleys awaits those who, for the sake of obtaining money or other advantages, invent and circulate false accusations?'

'*Prove* any accusation we have made to be false,' retorted Paul Delpech; 'and let me assure you, Monsieur l'Abbé, that you are playing with the life of your fair protégée. We should not, in any case, go to the scaffold alone, take my word for it.'

'That is not so certain,' replied the abbé, with unmoved sternness. 'Your wicked design may have miscarried; in fact, it did miscarry—in proof whereof, I have to inform you that a post-mortem examination, performed, at my instance, within twenty-four hours of death, clearly established the fact, that Madame de Vautpré died from natural causes only.'

A cry, a shout, a scream of women echoed those blessed words: Adrienne was in a moment clinging to the reverend speaker's knees; Madame Beaudésert seemed inclined to cast herself into his arms; Lisette, in a state of intense inflammation, shook her little fists at the cowering Delpechs, prevented only from transforming her threats into deeds by Claude's fast hold of her skirt, and iterated, 'Doucement—doucement, Lisette; it will be thy turn presently, never fear.'

'Calm yourself, my child,' said the abbé, as soon as he could make himself heard, and raising Adrienne, 'and you, Madame Beaudésert; the end of this matter is not yet.'

Paul Delpech, stunned, overborne for a while, reassumed by a violent effort his previous effrontery, and said in a sneering tone: 'Then, monsieur, if your post-mortem examination was skilfully conducted, the poudre rosé was but an innocent, harmless powder after all; have it so, if you will—and now, *mon père*, you and I may as well leave this good company—for a time!'

'Not so fast, if you please; your *intention* may, I repeat, have been evil enough—the poudre rosé you furnished, a poisonous drug: that is quite another question, upon which Madame Claude Simonet here can throw some light.'

'Ha, ha! cursed rascals!' shouted Claude; 'now look to yourselves.'

'*Tais-toi*, Claude,' interrupted Lisette; 'this is what I have to say. For certain reasons, I had come to entertain strong suspicions of Messieurs Delpech; and I said to myself, after receiving, as I did, the packet of poudre rosé, nicely sealed up, from Paul Delpech: "Lisette, my girl, thou hast persuaded thy unsuspecting young mistress to have secret dealings with two good-for-nothings—if there are any in France—it behoves thee, therefore, as an honest girl, to see no harm comes of it. Who knows what infernal drug this is which they palm off as poudre rosé? Not thou, Lisette; and therefore, to avoid all chance of evil, keep the sealed packet carefully locked up, and when mademoiselle asks thee for the magical poudre rosé, give her instead—well, what think you?—some of her own red *dentifrice*." Ha, ha! Messieurs les Empoisonneurs, that disarranges your fine plans, does it? And look here, my friends!' added Lisette, foaming over with exultation—'here is your precious packet, unopened, sealed up, just as you gave it me! and I hope, for your sakes, it will be found enough to poison a thousand horses!'

The exclamations that followed this speech must be left to the imagination, as well as Claude's obstreperous curvetings and gesticulations.

'There is nothing in the packet,' said the elder Delpech, hoarsely, 'nothing but bean-flour. Let us go!'

'That fact must be first ascertained,' replied the abbé, 'till which time, you cannot leave the château. And now, dear child, and you, my friends, let us retire, and return God thanks for this great deliverance.'

The poudre rosé was nothing but coloured bean-flour; the Delpechs were, nevertheless, prosecuted for the conspiracy, and sentenced to severe punishments. Of the further domestic history of the distinguished French family, resident in the south of France, of which the foregoing narrative supplies a hastily sketched episode, I know nothing except from the French journals, wherein I have read of two marriages, and, I think, five births, but not, as yet, one death, having occurred among the descendants of the Beaudéserts.

A WORLD IN THE MARKET.

WHEN Christopher Columbus presented himself before John II. of Portugal, in the year 1484, and unfolded to him a plan for sailing out into the unknown western sea, in the expectation of thus reaching the Indies, it is scarcely to be wondered at that the monarch was for a time incredulous, and that his courtiers considered the enthusiast to be fanatical, if not altogether mad. For the project of finding land in this way was opposed to the accumulated prejudices of centuries. It was still believed by the mass of mankind, and by none more thoroughly than by the learned professors of the day, that the earth was a flat disc, surrounded by the unfathomable ocean; and that not only was it folly and madness to attempt its transit, but if crossed, the intrepid voyager would reach some unimagined and unimaginable monstrosity. Yet more enlightened views were entertained by a few. Two centuries before, Dante had intimated his belief in an unknown portion of the globe. And at this very time, a contemporary of Columbus, the Florentine poet Pulci, in his *Morgante Maggiore*, makes the devil say of the fable concerning the Pillars of Hercules:

> Know that this theory is false; his bark
> The daring mariner shall urge far o'er
> The western wave, a smooth and level plain:
> Albeit the earth is fashioned like a wheel.
> Man was in ancient days of grosser mould;
> And Hercules might blush to learn how far
> Beyond the limits he had vainly set
> The dullest sea-boat soon shall wing her way.
> Men shall descry another hemisphere,
> Since to one common centre all things tend,
> So earth, by curious mystery divine,
> Well balanced hangs amid the starry spheres.
> At our antipodes are cities, states,
> And throngèd empires ne'er descried of yore.

That Columbus ever saw this passage, which so singularly anticipates his own discoveries and those of Copernicus, is not likely. But meanwhile he was not only dreaming, but working out a theory which was soon to be verified. Often as the story of his life has been told, it may be interesting to select from it a few facts illustrating the process by which he arrived at the discovery of the New World, and the difficulties with which he had to contend.

A native of Genoa, he entered on a nautical life at the age of fourteen, and seems to have been engaged for about twenty years in the dangers and adventures which attended his profession during that troublous age. About the year 1470, we find him settled in Portugal as a chart-maker; and soon after he married the orphan daughter of Bartolomeo Moñis de Perestrello, a navigator of some note, who had shared largely in the Portuguese expeditions of discovery along the African coast. Having access to this man's journals and charts, and being in frequent communication with those sea-farers who were to be found in the neighbouring ports, and from whom he procured the most accurate information on all points connected with his business, his curiosity was aroused as to the immense ocean which stretched to the west. The history of the manner in which his theory of the Indies was developed is very unsatisfactory. Our only authority is his son and biographer, Ferdinand, who says that his father classified under three heads the reasons which led to his discovery. These were—1. The nature of things; 2. The authority of learned writers; 3. The reports of navigators.

Under the first head, he started with the principle of the Ptolemaic system that the earth is a globe. According to this view, the circumference at the equator was divided into twenty-four hours of fifteen degrees each. Sixteen hours, stretching from the Asiatic city of Thinæ to the Canary Islands, were known; the other eight, making one-third of the whole, were unaccounted for. He argued that some portion of this space would be occupied by the eastern extremity of Asia; the rest must be ocean, and might be traversed. The principle of his argument was quite correct; but he was led into a very evident error by the false calculations of the time. He supposed the globe to be much smaller than it really is; the known land occupied only one-third of the circumference. Had he known the real distance, perhaps even his great mind would have quailed before the immensity of the enterprise.

To support his argument, he adduced the opinions of learned writers, for from very early ages there had been a vague and floating notion that land did exist far to the west of Spain. Among others, Seneca, in his *Medea*, distinctly prophesies that 'there will come an age in later years when the ocean will loose the bonds of things, and a great country be discovered; for another, like Typhus, shall lay bare a new world, and Thule shall no longer be the extremity of the earth.' Strabo also asserted that the ocean bathes India—that name being used generally for all Asia—on the east, and Spain on the west, and may easily be crossed.

Under the third head, Columbus gave the testimony of navigators. There were numerous reports abroad of islands lying a few hundred leagues to the west of the mainland. He discredited their existence, as numerous expeditions had been made in quest of them, without any result; but there were curious stories told, which could only be explained on the supposition of there being land somewhere. 'Thus one voyager had picked up,' says Ferdinand, 'a piece of wood ingeniously wrought, but not with iron; by which, the winds having been west for many days, he guessed that that piece of wood came from some island that way.' Another asserted that 'there had been canes found at sea, so thick, that every joint would hold above four quarts of wine'—evidently the bamboo. Many such accounts were related.

The views thus forced upon Columbus were strengthened by his correspondence with Paulo Toscanelli, a learned Florentine doctor, who adopted his opinion, and furnished him with much information, gathered chiefly from the works of Marco Polo and Sir John Mandeville, and with a chart, in which he placed India about four thousand miles distant from Spain, with the islands of Antilla and Japan on the way. At this time, also, the astrolabe, an instrument out of which the modern quadrant is an improvement, was first applied to seamanship, and made navigation in the open sea much more easy and certain.

From 1474, the date of his correspondence with Toscanelli, when we may assume that his views had taken definite shape, there is an almost entire blank of ten years in his history. We are told incidentally that he went to Iceland; but he does not appear to have learned anything from its people as to their early voyages to the northern coast of America. In 1484 we find him detailing his plan to John of Portugal, who promoted so largely the expeditions to the south of Africa, and, round Africa, to India. This monarch was so far interested as to refer the proposal first to a scientific junto, and then to a council of prelates and learned men, both of which rejected it as extravagant and unadvisable. John, however, was not quite satisfied; and so having managed to get from Columbus his charts and documents, he secretly sent a caravel, with instructions to attempt the route. We cannot regret that, after battling with the waves for some days, the pilots put back, and ridiculed the whole project; since, had they succeeded, the honour of the discovery would have been taken from its rightful claimant.

No sooner had Columbus discovered this ungenerous plot, than he left Portugal in indignation. Where he went, is not certain; it is said by some that he repaired to his native city of Genoa, and tried to get assistance from it; by others, that he crossed at once into Spain. It appears that before he left he sent his brother Bartholomew to seek support from England. The result of this mission may be stated at once. Bartholomew proceeded on his journey, but was captured and plundered by a corsair, and reduced to such poverty that he could do nothing, for some years, but keep himself alive by chart-making. When he was able to make his application, he met with a much more liberal reception from Henry VII. than Christopher had found elsewhere. The king expressed his willingness to engage in the enterprise, and Bartholomew set forth in high spirits to inform his brother, but learned on his road that the discovery had been already made, and that he had actually embarked on a second voyage.

But this was nine years later, and meanwhile Christopher was painfully working his way to success. After quitting Lisbon, we see him detailing his views to the Spanish nobility, more especially to the Dukes of Medina Sidonia and Medina Celi, whose names the Moorish wars have made illustrious. They both looked with favour on his project, but feared to run the risk of so immense an undertaking. The latter, however, procured for him an introduction to the Spanish monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella. These sovereigns were fully occupied with the war with Granada, then at its height. After some delay, Columbus gained an audience, and it was arranged that the matter should be referred to a council.

This council was held at Salamanca, and comprised all the most learned ecclesiastics, doctors, astronomers, and cosmographers who could be gathered together. The account of it is interesting. A simple, self-taught mariner was opposed to all the learning and bigotry of the day; and certainly, few ever sank so low in the depths of monastic intolerance and scholastic narrow-mindedness, as the Spanish ecclesiastics who established the Inquisition. He could scarcely treat of nautical matters; he had to engage in theological arguments, and meet the citations of numerous texts from the sacred volume, which his theories were said to controvert. Nor was Scripture alone quoted; the authority of the Fathers was adduced. The silly argument of Lactantius was held most weighty. 'Is there any one so foolish,' he asks, 'as to believe that there are antipodes, with their feet opposite to ours; people who walk with their heels upwards, and their heads hanging down? —that there is a part of the world in which all things are topsy-turvy; where the trees grow with their branches downwards, and where it rains, hails, and snows upwards?' St Augustine, too, had declared the theory of antipodes untenable, since it was impossible that the race of Adam could have crossed the ocean; and to suppose two creations was at variance with the Bible narrative. Other opinions of like force were brought forward. Moreover, it was urged that, even granting to the earth a spherical form, it was impossible that the heavens could be globular, and that therefore the other hemisphere could only be a dark chaotic mass. Another objector maintained that, even if a ship should succeed in reaching India by that route, she could never return; for the earth was shaped like a mountain, the descent of which was easy though dangerous, but which it would be utterly impossible ever to reascend, from the yielding nature of the waters.

Columbus answered boldly: his zeal was intensified by the opposition offered to him, and, doubtless, there was not a little scorn in the flash of his eye and the intonation of his voice, as he disposed of their childish arguments. As for the Scriptural quotations, he remarked that the inspired writers were not technical cosmographers, but spoke figuratively, adopting such popular views as would best serve to enforce their spiritual lessons. He honoured the Fathers as valuable religious guides, but ventured to call in question their scientific knowledge and philosophical acquirements; he shewed that if many of the ancients held the earth to be flat, other and no less illustrious men adopted the Ptolemaic system. He illustrated from his own travels that wherever a voyager goes he sees still a round firmament, changing with his position, and shewing no sign of termination. Instead of admitting that he was going counter to Scripture, he quoted, from its magnificent prophecies, passages in support of his views, and even, as he thought, alluding to himself.

His arguments were not altogether unavailing; he converted many to his views; but the bigotry and pride of the majority were too firmly settled to be overcome by an obscure foreigner. After keeping him in suspense for many weary months, the council published its decision against him. This did not lead to his immediate dismissal; he remained at the court in uncertainty for several years, sometimes on the point of leaving in disgust, but detained by vague promises; at others, joining in the military excitement of the time, in the hope of gaining influence for the prosecution of his life's work. He made many enemies, who considered him a dangerous and mischievous man, whose tenets were likely to subvert the good old doctrines of theology and science which they inherited from their fathers. But he also made friends, who, if they did not wholly believe in his theory, were at least anxious to help him in seeking to prove it. By their aid, another council was appointed, four or five years after that called at Salamanca. Its opinion was still more decisive than that of the first; it reported that the project was vain and impossible—far too fanciful an enterprise for so mighty a nation to undertake. The sovereigns accepted the verdict of this junto, and informed him of their determination not to enter on the work at present.

Here was a crisis. Columbus was now about forty-six years old. He had spent six years—years of matured wisdom, and at a time of life when every winter told on his physical energy, in the expectation of ultimate assistance; and now his hopes were crushed. What should he do? Where should he go? Should he commence the weary work again? go to some other court and curry favour, with the probability of a similar result?—should he be willing once more

> To lose good days, that might be better spent;
> To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
> To spend to-day, to be put back to-morrow;
> To feed on Hope, to pine with Fear and Sorrow;
> To fret his soul with crosses and with cares;
> To eat his heart through comfortless despairs;
> To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
> To spend, to give, to want, to be outdone?

Or should he give up the struggle, and, believing that he held in his hand an inestimable blessing for the world, let it wither unbestowed because of the world's incredulity?

No; he could not resign the cause; he had been inspired to preach and to do, or to perish in the doing; he would go to France, and seek help there. Acting on this resolution, he set out on the journey; but he was never to reach France. On his road, dispirited and wayworn, he knocked at the convent of Santa Maria de Rabida, about half a league distant from the Andalusian port of Palos, and asked for a crust of bread and a drop of water. The prior, Juan Perez de Marchena, took him in, and was not long in discovering the great mind which a pauper's clothing could not hide. He learned the story of his life. He listened to the glorious project, and shared in the lofty enthusiasm of his guest. He collected his friends; zealous students, shrewd navigators, and keen merchants from the town of Palos. This little council knew better and saw further than the learned assemblages at Lisbon, and Salamanca, and Cordova. Its members urged him to prosecute his plan with vigour; but as they were Spaniards, and were loath to let Spain lose the honour of the undertaking, they urged him to renew his suit in that country. The honest prior had formerly been confessor to Queen Isabella. He went to her at Santa Fé, and persuaded her to send once more for Columbus. He came, and found the whole court in a tumult of triumph at the conclusion of the great war against the infidel Moors. The Spaniard, Clemencin, has sketched his portrait: 'A man obscure, and but little known at this time, followed the court. Confounded with the crowd of importunate applicants, feeding his imagination in the corners of antechambers with the pompous project of discovering a world, melancholy and dejected in the midst of general rejoicing, he beheld with indifference, and almost with contempt, the conclusion of a conquest which swelled all bosoms with jubilee, and seemed to have reached the utmost bounds of desire. The man was Christopher Columbus.'

As soon as time could be spared, after further months of waiting, his project was again entertained, but not with immediate success. It was arranged to fit out an expedition; but Columbus demanded privileges which offended the pride of Ferdinand. He insisted on being appointed admiral and viceroy of whatever countries he should discover, and on receiving a tenth part of all the royal income from them. If he failed, he expected no return; but if he succeeded, he thought that these honours were not too great compensation for the great work which he alone could initiate and carry out, and to which he had devoted his life. The monarch thought they were. No compromise could be effected. So, utterly disgusted, the high-spirited adventurer went forth once more. It was in February 1492 that he thought he had seen the last of Spanish pusillanimity. But it was not to be—he was yet to secure for Spain immortal glory in having been the means of discovering the New World; and immortal shame, in its treatment of the discoverer. While on his road, his friends resolved to make a desperate effort. They hastened to the queen, and detailed to her the glorious possibility she was resigning. Her enthusiasm was aroused; she determined no longer to share in the vacillating conduct of her husband, but to engage in the work for and by herself. 'I undertake the enterprise for my own crown of Castille,' she exclaimed; 'and will pledge my own jewels to raise the needful funds!'

With this declaration, our narrative closes. Having once put her whole heart into the business, she prosecuted it with energy. Before many months had passed, Columbus was on his way to the Indies. How many and heavy difficulties attended him, and how valiantly he overcame them all, let those who do not already know the exciting story, learn it from accessible biographies. We have seen the prospect of the New World tossed up and down the market for eighteen years, handled and scrutinised, ridiculed and sneered at, like a trumpery piece of merchandise. It had found a purchaser at last.

MY UNCLE'S REQUEST.

Four individuals—namely, my wife, my infant son, my maid-of-all-work, and myself—occupy one of a row of very small houses in the suburbs of London. I am a thoroughly domestic man, and notwithstanding that my occupation necessitates absence from my mansion between the hours of 9 A.M. and 5 P.M., my heart is generally at home with my diminutive household. My wife and I love regularity and quiet above all things; and although, since the arrival of my son and heir, we had not enjoyed that peace which we did during the first year of our married life, yet his juvenile, though somewhat powerful little lungs had as yet failed in making ours a noisy house. Our regularity had, moreover, remained undisturbed, and we got up, went to bed, dined, breakfasted, and teaed at the same time, day after day.

We had been going on in this clock-work fashion for a year and a half, when one morning the postman brought to our door a letter of ominous appearance, and on looking at the direction, I found that it came from an old, rich, and very eccentric uncle of mine, with whom, for certain reasons, we wished to remain on the best of terms. 'What can Uncle Martin have to write about!' was our simultaneous exclamation, and I opened it with considerable curiosity.

'Martin House, Herts, *October* 17, 1857.

'Dear Nephew—You may perhaps have heard that I am forming an aviary here. A friend in Rotterdam has written to me to say that he has sent by the boat, which will arrive in London to-morrow afternoon, a very intelligent parrot and a fine stork. As the vessel arrives too late for them to be sent on the same night, I shall be obliged by your taking the birds home, and forwarding them to me the next morning.—With my respects to your good lady, I remain, your affectionate uncle, Ralph Martin.'

We looked at each other in silence, and then my wife said: 'They're only birds; it might have been worse.'

I said nothing, but got a book on natural history, and turned to 'Stork.' With trembling fingers I passed over the fact of 'his hind toe being short, the middle toe long, and joined to the outer one by a large membrane, and by a smaller one to the inner toe,' because that would not matter much for one night; but I groaned out to my wife the pleasant intelligence that 'his height is four feet, his appetite extremely voracious,' and 'his food—frogs, mice, worms, snails, and eels.' Where were we to provide a supper and breakfast of this description for him?

I went to my office, and passed anything but a pleasant day, my thoughts constantly reverting to our expected visitors. At four o'clock, I took a cab to the docks, and on arriving there, inquired for the ship, which was pointed out to me as 'the one with the crowd upon the quay.' On driving up, I discovered why there was a crowd, and the discovery did not bring comfort with it. On the deck, on one leg, stood the stork. Whether it was the sea-voyage, or the leaving his home, or, being a stork of high moral principle, he was grieving at the continual, and rather joyous and exultant swearing of the parrot, I do not know, but I never saw a more melancholy-looking object in my life.

I went down on the deck, and did not like the expression of relief that came over the captain's face when he found what I had come for. The transmission of the parrot from the ship to the cab was an easy matter, as he was in a cage, but the stork was merely tethered by one leg; and although he did his best, when brought to the foot of the ladder, in trying to get up, he failed utterly, and had to be half-shoved, half-hauled all the way; which, as he got astride, after the manner of equestrians, on every other bar, was a work of some difficulty. I hurried him into the cab, and ordering the man to drive as quick as possible, got in with my guests. At first, I had to keep dodging my head about, to keep my face away from his bill as he turned round; but all of a sudden he broke the little window at the back of the cab, thrust his head through, and would keep it there, notwithstanding I kept pulling him back. Consequently, when we drew up at my door, there was a mob of about a thousand strong around us. I got him in as quick as I could, and shut the door.

How can I describe the spending of that evening? how can I get sufficient power out of the English language to let you know what a nuisance that bird was to us? How can I tell you the cool manner in which he inspected our domestic arrangements?—walking slowly into rooms, and standing on one leg until his curiosity was satisfied; the expression of wretchedness that he threw over his entire person when he was tethered to one of the banisters, and had found out that, owing to our limited accommodation, he was to remain in the hall all night; the way in which he ate the snails specially provided for him, verifying to the letter the naturalist's description of his appetite. How can you, who have not had a stork staying with you, have any idea of the change which came over his temper after his supper—how he pecked at everybody who came near him; how he stood sentinel at the foot of the stairs; how my wife and I made fruitless attempts to get past, followed by ignominious retreats; how at last we out-manœuvred him by throwing a table-cloth over his head, and then rushing by him, gained the top of the stairs before he could disentangle himself.

Added to all this, we had to endure language from that parrot which would have disgraced a pot-house; indeed, so scurrilous did he become, that we had to take him and lock him up in the coal-hole, where, from fatigue, or the darkness of his bedroom, he soon swore himself to sleep.

We were quite ready for rest, and the forgetfulness which, we hoped, sleep, that 'balm of hurt minds,' would bring with it; but our peace was not to last long. About 2 A.M., I was awakened by my wife, and told to listen; I did so, and heard a sort of scrambling noise outside the door. 'What can that be?' thought I. 'He has broken his string, and is coming up stairs,' said my wife; and then, remembering that the nursery-door was generally left open, she urged my immediately stopping his further progress. 'But, my dear,' said I, 'what am I to do in my present defenceless state of clothing, if he should take to pecking?' My wife's expression at the idea of my considering myself before the baby, determined me at once, come what come might, to go and do him battle. Out I went, and sure enough, there he was on the landing, resting himself, after his unusual exertion, by tucking one leg up. He looked so subdued, that I was about to take him by the string and lead him down stairs, when he drew back his head, and in less time than it takes to relate, I was back in my room, bleeding profusely from a very severe wound in the leg. I shouted out to the nurse to shut the door, and determined to let the infamous bird go where he liked. I bound up my leg and went to bed again; but the thought that there was a stork wandering about the house, prevented me from getting any more sleep. From certain sounds that we heard, we had little doubt but that he was passing some of his time in the cupboard where we kept our spare crockery, and an inspection the next day confirmed this.

In the morning, I ventured cautiously out, and finding he was in our spare bedroom, I shut the door upon him. I then sent for a large sack, and with the help of the table-cloth, and the boy who cleans our shoes, we got him into it without any further personal damage. I took him off in this way to the station, and sent him and the parrot off to my uncle by the first train.

We have determined that, taking our chance about a place in my uncle's will or not, we will never again have anything to do with any foreign animals, however much he may ask and desire it.

EARLY SUGGESTION OF THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

The experiments of Franklin in drawing down the electric spark from a passing thunder-cloud in June 1752—preceded as they were by a few months by Dabilard's similar experiments, on Franklin's suggestion, at Marly, near Paris—were regarded with much interest throughout Europe. As far as known, Franklin and the other great experimenters in this line of investigation entertained no conception of the possible application of electricity to the purposes of a telegraph; but this thought occurred to an obscure person residing at Renfrew in Scotland, within seven months of Franklin's celebrated kite experiment. Such fully appears from the following communication to the *Scots Magazine* of February 1753:

'*To the Author of the Scots Magazine.*

'*Renfrew, Feb.* 1, 1753.

'Sir—It is well known to all who are conversant in electrical experiments, that the electric power may be propagated along a small wire from one place to another, without being sensibly abated by the length of its progress. Let, then, a set of wires, equal in number to the letters of the alphabet, be extended horizontally between two given places, parallel to one another, and each of them about an inch distant from that next to it. At every twenty yards' end, let them be fixed in glass, or jewellers' cement, to some firm body, both to prevent them from touching the earth or any other non-electric, and from breaking by their own gravity. Let the electric gun-barrel be placed at right angles with the extremities of the wires, and about an inch below them. Also let the wires be fixed in a solid piece of glass, at six inches from the end; and let that part of them which reaches from the glass to the machine, have sufficient spring and stiffness to recover its situation after having been brought in contact with the barrel. Close by the supporting glass, let a ball be suspended from every wire; and about a sixth or an eighth of an inch below the balls, place the letters of the alphabet, marked on bits of paper, or any other substance that may be light enough to rise to the electrified ball; and at the same time, let it be so contrived that each of them may reassume its proper place when dropped. All things constructed as above, and the minute previously fixed, I begin the conversation with my distant friend in this manner. Having set the electrical machine agoing as in ordinary experiments, suppose I am to pronounce the word *Sir;* with a piece of glass, or any other *electric per se*, I strike the wire *S*, so as to bring it in contact with the barrel, then *i*, then *r*, all in the same way; and my correspondent, almost in the same instant, observes these several characters rise in order to the electrified balls at his end of the wires. Thus I spell away as long as I think fit; and my correspondent, for the sake of memory, writes the characters as they rise, and may join and read them afterwards as often as he inclines. Upon a signal given, or from choice, I stop the machine; and taking up the pen in my turn, I write down whatever my friend at the other end strikes out.

'If anybody should think this way tiresome, let him, instead of the balls, suspend a range of bells from the roof, equal in number to the letters of the alphabet; gradually decreasing in size from the bell *A* to *Z:* and from the horizontal wires, let there be another set reaching to the several bells—one, namely, from the horizontal wire *A* to the bell *A*, another from the horizontal wire *B* to the bell *B*, &c. Then let him who begins the discourse bring the wires in contact with the barrel, as before; and the electrical spark, breaking on bells of different size, will inform his correspondent by the sound what wires have been touched. And thus, by some practice, they may come to understand the language of the chimes in whole words, without being put to the trouble of noting down every letter.

'The same thing may be otherwise effected. Let the balls be suspended over the characters as before, but instead of bringing the ends of the horizontal wires in contact with the barrel, let a second set reach from the electrified cake, so as to be in contact with the horizontal ones; and let it be so contrived at the same time, that any of them may be removed from its corresponding horizontal by the slightest touch, and may bring itself again into contact when left at liberty. This may be done by the help of a small spring and slider, or twenty other methods, which the least ingenuity will discover. In this way, the characters will always adhere to the balls, excepting when any one of the secondaries is removed from contact with its horizontal; and then the letter at the other end of the horizontal will immediately drop from its ball. But I mention this only by way of variety.

'Some may perhaps think, that although the electric fire has not been observed to diminish sensibly in its progress through any length of wire that has been tried hitherto, yet as that has never exceeded some thirty or forty yards, it may be reasonably supposed, that in a far greater length it would be remarkably diminished, and probably would be entirely drained off in a few miles by the surrounding air. To prevent the objection, and save longer argument, lay over the wires from one end to the other with a thin coat of jewellers' cement. This may be done for a trifle of additional expense; and as it is an *electric per se*, will effectually secure any part of the fire from mixing with the atmosphere.—I am, &c. C. M.'

Who was C. M., who thus appears, at so early a period, to have had so intelligent an idea of this most wonderful of all the applications of electricity?* From a communication in the *Commonwealth* (Glasgow newspaper), it seems very probable that he was Charles Marshall, residing afterwards in Well Meadow, Paisley—a person of whom we have only this reminiscence from an aged lady, that he was 'a very clever man,' who had formerly resided in Renfrew, and 'who could light a room with coal-reek [smoke], and make lightning speak and write upon the wall.'

A SONG OF THE SEASON.

Yet once again, before we part,
  Fill high the bowl for me,
And drink to every human heart,
  Where'er the same may be!
Success to each untiring hand
  That throws the shuttle now,
That works the mine, that tills the land,
  Or guides the ocean-plough!

The rich we also gladly drink—
  Long may their wealth endure!
And let them learn betimes to think
  Less hardly of the poor—
That shapeless form they blindly dread,
  That spectre of their thought,
Is dumbly praying to be led,
  And pining to be taught.

We drink the lover and his love,
  The artist and his art,
The priest who lifts to God above
  The worldly weighted heart;
The poet sowing seeds of light;
  The warder on the tower,
Who watches through the troubled night
  The invading march of power.

We drink the small unconquered band
  Beneath an Indian sky,
Soon may the sword in every hand
  Be sheathed in Victory!
The tempered blade has lost its edge
  With smiting nations through,
And well we can afford to pledge
  The stricken conquered too.

Now yet again fill high the bowl,
  Though not for fame or worth,
And drink to every wretched soul
  Without one friend on earth;
Beat on, unjudged by us, lone heart;
  The Judge who sits unseen
Beholds thee, not as now thou art,
  But as thou mightst have been.

In solemn silence drink the slave
  In whom the hope remains
To wed with freedom in the grave,
  Or live—divorced from chains.
We drink th' oppressed of every clime,
  The chained of every hue;
Soon may the chafing hand of Time
  Wear every fetter through!

The ruddy blaze begins to fall;
  Draw closer round the fire;
Bring out the choicest wine of all—
  Fill every goblet higher;
And gently touch, before we part,
  A chord of finer tone,
And pray that every human heart
  Be happy as our own! R. R.

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* There had been experiments by members of the Royal Society at Shooters' Hill in 1747, from which it became certain that electricity could be conducted through two miles of wire; but this simple truth falls evidently short of C. M.'s suggestion.

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THE VINTAGE.

ANY Englishman who may have the good-fortune to pass the autumn months in the Côte d'Or, will have a scene of plenty impressed on his memory, that will not easily fade away. Grapes! grapes! grapes!—all the country-side in activity to gather in the luscious harvest. The rich man who stores his thousands of casks in his cellars, the poor man who owns just a little patch of vines sufficient to yield but scant allowance for the coming year—all alike engaged in the absorbing *vendange.*

French vineyards have often been justly compared to English hop-grounds; but the anxiety felt at home as to the possible quality of the produce of the latter, bears no proportion to the intense excitement that prevails in a French wine-district as the time for the vintage draws near. Months of care, and cost, and toil have been patiently bestowed; every separate plant has been tended, trained, and nurtured, early and late; the crop is abundant, the fruit looks promising; but so many accidents may affect the goodly show, that it is only in such years as the last, when sunshine has covered the earth like a flood, that a universal jubilate is heard on all sides. There must be just enough rain to swell the fruit, but not enough to damage its flavour. This is not all; the thing most dreaded is hail: it often happens that miles of vineyards just ready for harvest, are laid prostrate by visitations in the form of hail-storms, of which we in England have no idea; and hence the numerous French companies for 'insuring against hail.' Sometimes the grapes ripen unequally; sometimes the skin of the fruit thickens; rarely, indeed, do all things work together for the good of the vine, as in the year of the comet of 1858.

This same vine is also a most fickle lady: the distance of a few yards is often sufficient to produce great difference in the quality of the fruit of the same species. A slight variation in the depth of the soil, or an increased degree of inclination on its surface, will materially affect the wine. I saw one vineyard, of which the produce was not 'classed,' being considered *hors de ligne* (of exceptionable quality); while the surrounding vines, *apparently* enjoying no greater advantages of aspect and soil, belonging to the same proprietor, cultivated in the same way, and belonging to the same species, the *pineau*, were ranked by the learned in such matters in the first category. Beaune is the focus of the wine-trade of Burgundy; not far from it grow the wines of Pommard and Nuits, with the far-famed Clos-Vougeot, and quite near the town, the less known but scarcely less delicious Clos-des-Fèves.

The days for vintaging each district or *commune* are fixed by the mayor, nobody being at liberty to gather the crop before the date which is officially and publicly notified, but all being free to perform the operation as much later as they please; few, however, avail themselves of this latitude. There is scarcely ever any visible separation between one man's vineyard and another; and in order to prevent any *accidental* infringement of the footpath, which is its only boundary, every one thinks it better to be on the spot. This remark does not apply to the large proprietors, whose lands are well known and defined, and who risk nothing by fixing their vintage a few days later than their poor neighbours.

Beaune stands in a broad plain watered by the Saône, from which, however, it is far distant, lying under the shelter of a range of mountainous country which protects it on the north. As the period for the vintage approaches, the poor people come down from the mountains for many leagues round, in order to earn wherewith to clothe them for the winter.

They take their stand before daybreak on the public *place* in little bands or companies, a few families, or the population of a hamlet, keeping together for better for worse as long as the vintage lasts. They are called *layots* and *layottes;* every young layot attaches himself to a layotte for the time being, works by her side in the vineyard, and lightens her labour there as much as he can, by carrying her basket for her when it is full or weighty. This acquaintance ends with the occasion that has given rise to it; and, like the 'muffins' of Canada, the layottes, at the end of the short season, see their swains no more.

The price paid to the vintagers varies greatly according to circumstances; some years, as little as twelve sous a day has been considered sufficient remuneration. This must be when the crop is scanty and the hands are numerous. This year, the reverse was the case; a crop a fourth above the average of the best seasons, and the labourers few. The long duration of uniform fine weather ripened the grapes ten days before the usual period, and, the *distant* mountain population not being aware of this, the harvest was of necessity gathered by those who, living nearer to Beaune, had the opportunity of obtaining exact information. Three francs, and even three francs five sous a day, were paid at Pommard.

There is a regulation that children shall receive the same pay as grown people, so the parents come down accompanied by their little ones. It must, however, be added that the 'bands' where the children are numerous are the last to be hired. These poor creatures often walk a long way in addition to their day's toil; the vine-dressers, who hire them at two or three o'clock in the morning, march them off to work at a considerable distance from the town, to which they return, nevertheless, singing in the evening, to begin again the next day, having slept under an enormous shed, where each pays a sou for the privilege of resting his or her weary limbs on clean straw.

It must not be supposed that the mountaineers alone are engaged in the vintage; every cottage is locked up, and men, women, and children go to work, either on their own patch of vines, or on the lands of the large proprietors. When Sunday is the day fixed, mass is said at four in the morning, so that all may be at their destination before daylight. Some proprietors employ hundreds of vintagers, who are divided into bands, each under the direction of a *vigneron* (vine-dresser), who has had charge of a portion of the crop during the past year. It is his duty to see that they work diligently, and to divide fairly the food which is sent to the vineyard twice in the day. It consists of bread, cheese, vegetables, and soup, into the composition of which, meat seldom enters. The soup is served in a large kettle, round which a band of vintagers seat themselves, each armed with a spoon. The vegetables follow in like manner, and thus knives, forks, and plates are dispensed with. The porters, in consideration of their hard work, receive a bottle of wine per diem; and all help themselves, without let or hinderance, to the grapes; the consequence is, that a year seldom passes without some of these poor people falling victims to their imprudence.

The women, boys, and children cut the bunches of grapes from the plants with a small clasp-knife, and perform the operation with astonishing quickness and dexterity. As the bunches are severed, they are put into the *small* baskets, with which each person of the band is provided, and these are emptied into larger ones, which are borne, when full, on the shoulders of the *porteurs*, to the place where the *balange* is waiting for them. The porters are the strong young men of the party; and such they had need be, for the baskets each has to carry contains more than one hundredweight of fruit.

The *balange*, or *belange*, is an immense oval tub, six or seven feet long, and four deep, and containing fourteen or fifteen baskets of grapes; it is the prominent feature of the day. Every available cart, wagon, or wheeled creature, has a balange mounted on it; every horse, far and near, is pressed into the service, and the public road is literally thronged with the purple load.

Those who have never been in a wine-country, can form little idea of the sense of abundance that forces itself upon the mind on a day like this. The fruit is not of the black, brown, patchy nondescript tint with which we northerns are familiar, but is covered with a delicate bloom, such as we see on the plum ere it falls from the tree; a uniform lovely colour without speck or blemish. But the balange no sooner arrives at the *pressoir*, than it is ruthlessly despoiled of its fair burden; the whole is tumbled into a huge vat, and trodden down into as small a compass as may be.

One man's pair of feet are generally enough for this preliminary trampling; but as soon as fermentation actively commences, as many as six or eight men may be seen treading the great vats, up to their waists in wine, and, of course, without a thread of clothing on their bodies; fortunately, all foreign matter either goes off in fermentation or in deposit.

When the wine is of fine generous quality, this process of treading (*refouler les cuves*) is equivalent to taking a very hot bath; it is repeated three or four times, about an hour each time being sufficient to well press down towards the bottom of the vat the stalks of the fruit which the fermentation forces upwards. About ten days after the red grapes have been put into the vats, the wine is fit for putting into casks, which, however, are left open at the bung-hole as long as the fermentation continues. As soon as all the liquid has been dipped out of the vats, the residue—consisting of the stalks and skins of the grapes (*la gène*)—is put into a huge cylindrical press, and subjected to the pressure of a disc equal to its circumference, which disc is forced through the bore by the action of a powerful screw; thus driving the *gène* to the further extremity of the cylinders, and forcing the wine through the narrow interstices left for this purpose through its whole length. Thus nothing is lost.[*] An inferior spirit, called *eau-de-vie du pays*, is distilled from the *gène;* it is worth, this year, fourteen sous a quart or *litre*. The fine wines are invariably put into new casks. So abundant has the harvest been this year, that the supply of hogsheads was by no means adequate to the demand; and their price, which in ordinary seasons is eleven or twelve francs, ran up this time to thirty.

It seems a hard case that the wine in this, its pure state, should be utterly out of the reach of the general consumer, but so it is; it is deteriorated and falsified by every dealer, wholesale and retail, through whose hands it passes. When this was made clear to me by a gentleman in Burgundy, I could not help saying: 'Mais! c'est donc aussi difficile d'avoir du vin pur que de gagner le ciel.' The answer was: 'Beaucoup plus; car gagner le ciel cela ne dépend que de vous, tandis que pour le vin il y a bien d'autres qui s'y mêlent.'

The white wine grown here bears but a small proportion to the red; it is pressed, and put *at once* into casks left open at the bung-hole, to allow the escape of the gas engendered by the fermentation. Thus it is not subjected to the treading, as the red wine is. The poor people either obtain the use of the press of their richer neighbours, or pay for the hire of one on the premises of some wine-merchant. The same *ordonnance* which names the day for the vintage, fixes also the date after which the *grappillage* is permitted. *Then* the poor are at liberty to go into the vineyards and gather the grapes that may have been overlooked, or not sufficiently ripe at the vintage, a fortnight previous. A few days after the *grappillage*, the vines are open to the sportsman.

Last year, the wine was good everywhere; but when the season is late or cold, the grapes in the hilly districts ripen but indifferently. There is a great difference in the temperature of Beaune and the hill-country a league or two from it, where I found the climate remarkably like that of North Wales; somewhat hotter during the day perhaps, but characterised by the same freshness, morning and evening, and by the same elasticity in the air at all times. The peasants live on very little, scarcely ever seeing a morsel of meat. The farm-servants on a rich man's estate have for breakfast *soupe au lard* or *aux légumes*. The former is made by boiling two or three rashers of fat bacon in two gallons of water, which is thickened by the addition of a few potatoes, and poured on slices of good bread, composed of equal parts of wheat and rye. For dinner, they have vegetables, bread, most indifferent cheese, and some cheap fruit, either fresh or baked. For supper they get either soup or rice boiled in milk, and called by them *des gaudes*. In the château where I had the good-fortune to be, the men had meat on Sundays, and were well paid for their labour; but it was *une bonne maison* (a good house), and they are few and far between. A bottle of wine a day is allowed to each man—it is, I should say, about the strength of good cider. The fruit given to the labourers costs but little: for instance, the peaches which grow on trees in the open vineyards, as apples do in orchards, were sold in the market of Beaune at a sou a hundred. They had a bitterish taste, and I used to see them divided equally between the men and the pigs. Walnuts, too, are another cheap fruit, three sous a hundred; but they are too valuable for the sake of the oil they yield to be eaten to any extent. The country people rise very early; the flail may be constantly heard between two and three o'clock in the morning; and soon after, the *vacher* (cow-herd) goes his rounds, blowing a horn, to announce his presence to the villagers, who confide their cattle to him for the day. He leads them to pasture, taking them home, in summer, to be milked in the middle of the day and in the evening. When winter comes, he receives a measure of corn and a bundle of straw as the price of his care of each cow. The corn is always given, and varies in value from three and a half to seven francs; but the straw is sometimes compounded for at fifteen sous. Two sous a month are paid for taking care of a sheep.

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[*] I saw a press employed which attained the end much more completely than the one above described. It exercised a *compound* pressure on the *gène*, and was a beautiful little machine; but I fear the jealousy of the local manufacturers will prevent its becoming known. It is invented by a Swiss, whose name I am sorry I do not remember.

The butter in this country is *un*-eatable, the cream being kept eight days or more before it is churned; and the bacon has a tallowy taste.

The temperance which characterises the diet of the labourers presides also over that of the dogs and cats. There were four pointers in the kennel at the Château de ——, which were fed on *eau grasse* (dish-water) and barley-bread. Now, as a French cook invariably commences his operations by cutting off any fat he may happen to find on a joint, this same dish-water cannot be very *grasse*. These dogs were thorough-bred, but spoiled from the practice, common in France, of making every *chien de chasse* a dog of all work. Few gentlemen have the means and the taste to keep pointers, setters, and retrievers; and my friend Tabac and his companions were employed in either capacity indifferently.

As to the other domestic animals, the most amusing thing was the idea that *tea* was a cure for all their ailments; my tea-leaves were carefully dried, and put aside for the benefit of the cows, pigs, or goats that may become invalids during the winter. In Paris, tea has become a fashionable beverage in the evening; but in the provinces, it is still regarded as a medicine, and taken, very weak, as a remedy for indigestion.

CARLYLE'S HISTORY OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

FIRST ARTICLE.

THESE two bulky volumes of Mr Carlyle's, so long and eagerly expected, relate, as is now generally known, in far larger proportion to the father of the hero than to the hero himself; and thus we are insured not only a complete biography of the latter —since no biography can be called complete that does not paint in detail those parental influences that mould the child, the 'father to the man'—but we have much new light thrown upon a remarkable character hitherto scantily appreciated; a character especially appealing to Mr Carlyle's sympathies, and portrayed by him with an enthusiasm that will carry most of his readers away, if not to his own ultimate conclusions, at least far beyond the limits of their previously formed estimate; such enthusiasm as our author's, whether it make for or against a man, being very contagious, as we all know by this time. Our task, however, is not to review this great work; and therefore, without stopping to inquire whether there be not a little wilful exaggeration, in praise of the past, with its 'veracities and wholesome despotisms;' in dispraise of the present and its 'constitutional litanies;' a little wilful injustice in the prominence assigned to pet virtues, and the shadow cast over pet faults; a little, nay, a good deal of what Mr Carlyle himself calls 'inarticulate bellowings,' angry roarings indeed in this case, as of the King of Beasts himself, expressive of noble indignation, but hardly definite as to its cause: without, we say, attempting to discuss these and other critical questions, we hasten on to our task of snatching from these most living pictures, as they pass before us, some faint outlines, on a small scale, of the Prussian court under Friedrich Wilhelm's sway, and more especially of this singular king himself.

Born in 1688—just twelve years before the 'old electorate of Brandenburg became the kingdom of Prussia, and the family of Hohenzollern, slowly mounting these many centuries, reached the uppermost round of the ladder'—Friedrich Wilhelm had, we find, a notable mother. Sophie Charlotte, daughter of the Electress Sophia, and sister to our George I., was, 'beyond doubt, a bright, airy lady, very graceful, very witty and ingenious, skilled to speak, skilled to hold her tongue,' has 'left, one may say, something of her likeness, and still traceable in the Prussian nation and its form of culture to this day.' The friend of Leibnitz, the admirer of Bayle, 'foreign courtiers used to call her the republican queen.' Her husband, with his 'turn for ostentation,' 'slightly crooked, most sensitive, thin of skin, and liable to sudden flaws of temper,' was hardly a man to inspire her with profound veneration; 'neither did she care much about crowns or upholstery magnificences of any kind, having meditated from old upon the infinitely little, and harassed Leibnitz by seeking to know even 'the why of the why.' All the warmth of this brilliant nature concentrated itself upon her only son; not that her subtle intellect could altogether resist analysing her idol, in whom she noticed tendencies to avarice, and sundry defects in mind and manners; 'but he was all she had to love in this world—a rugged creature, inexpressibly dear to her.' Rugged, indeed, he was; impracticable from the first; swallowing down a shoe-buckle, to the distraction of nurses, flinging himself suddenly out of a third-story window, 'nothing but the hands left within, and hanging on there by the sill, fixedly resolute to obey gravitation' rather than some obnoxious behest of his governess, Madame de Montbail, of whom we shall hear again. When on a visit with his mother to his uncle's court at Hanover, he was constantly fighting with his cousin George (afterwards our George II.), and 'giving him a bloody nose, though the latter was twice his own age.' Neither could he do any good in that intellectual circle 'in the way of breeding; sage Leibnitz himself, with his big black periwig and large patient nose, finding it impossible to put any metaphysics into such a boy.' In soldiering, however, he came out more successfully, taking part, at the age of eighteen, in the grand Spanish Succession War; three years later, just after his marriage, seeing 'hot service' at the siege of Tournay and terrible battle of Malplaquet; becoming more and more devoted to military interests, 'especially to making his own regiment in Berlin a very pattern of a regiment.' And, indeed, it was natural enough that he should solace himself with a hobby, for things in general were far from satisfactory to him. His bright, loving mother dead, replaced by a half-crazy stepmother; his natural love of thrift crossed by 'great waste of labour and means;' an expensive court, an impoverished country; his unbending veracity forced to steer through 'whirlpools of court intrigues and arrangements;' he surely, over and above his domestic happiness, needs the comforts of this innocent-seeming hobby of his, this 'fine regiment of tallish men.'

We have spoken of Friedrich Wilhelm's early marriage. His wife was also his first-cousin, Sophie Dorothée, daughter of our George I., and of that unhappy Sophia Dorothea of Zell, of whose sad fate we all have some dim, tragic idea. Sophie Dorothée was called a beauty by courtier contemporaries; she lives and breathes in Mr Carlyle's pages as a 'serious, comely, rather plump, maternal-looking lady; something thoughtful in those gray, still eyes of hers, in the turn of her face and carriage of her head, as she sits there, considerately gazing out upon a world which would never conform to her will —decidedly a handsome, wholesome, and affectionate aspect of face.' Her two eldest boys died in infancy: the one, they say—were there ever more painful nursery legends?—killed by the noise of the cannon firing for joy over it; the other, crushed to death by the weighty splendour of its christening-robes, and the little crown too hard and heavy for the baby-head. There was only one daughter, Wilhelmina, living; so no wonder that when, on the 24th of January 1712, another son was born, there was great joy in the Prussian court, Friedrich Wilhelm in his tempestuous gladness being 'like to stifle the infant with his caresses, or at least to scorch him in the blaze of the fire.' In little more than a year after this auspicious event, the old king of 'ostentatious habits and sensitive nerves' is hurried out of the world by a fancied apparition; and Friedrich Wilhelm reigning in his stead, the unconscious baby crowing in its cradle is crown-prince of Prussia.

Our narrow limits prevent our breaking off the thread of this narrative to follow Mr Carlyle through the history he has given us of the Hohenzollern family, from Conrad, younger son of Hohenzollern and Burggraf of Nürnberg in 1170, down to the great elector, father of the first king, whose death we have just had announced to us. There is no such magician as Mr Carlyle for calling *spirits* from history's vasty deep, making its dry bones live, causing us to hear through all the dust of centuries, through whatever obsolete armour or disguise of circumstance, the beatings of the human heart—in its strength and weakness alike so closely akin to our own. But we return to the Prussian court on the 25th of February 1713, and to the summary reforms carrying on there. The old king, who had had his delight in 'gold-sticks, silver-sticks, and other histrionic functionaries,' had not been half an hour dead, before the 'rugged young king, with his plangent metallic voice, and steady beaming eyes,' proceeded to announce his intention of bringing down his household 'to the lowest footing of the indispensable'—and so he did. The 'thousand saddle-horses,' many of them mere imaginary quadrupeds,' are reduced to thirty, but these are 'very actual.' The pension-list is cut down in like manner; and the king, willing to save even half-a-dollar, in about two months realises the *minimum*, or about a fifth of the previous expenditure. Nor does his thrift begin and end at home; 'steadily carrying out the great principle, that needful work is to be rigorously well done, needless work rigorously pitched out of doors,' he has Prussia at length made into 'the most thrifty, hardy, vigorous, and Spartan country any modern king ever ruled over.' This was no easy matter to accomplish, requiring 'genius,' which Mr Carlyle defines as a 'transcendent capacity of taking trouble first of all,' pointing out to us that 'given a huge stack of tumbled thrums, it is not in our sleep that we shall find the vital centre of it, or get the first thrum by the end;' which indeed sounds an incontrovertible proposition, yet worth quoting as one we have a trick of practically forgetting in connection with our own private and special thrums, having all of us a stack of these more or less huge.

Nothing, we are told, could exceed his majesty's simplicity yet cleanliness of habitudes. In his dread of dust, he gradually banishes 'all silk and cloth furniture, carpets, nay, even stuffed chairs,' as 'dust-harbouring materials,' and will at length have everything of wood, where the dust-war can best be carried on *à l'outrance*. 'Eating heartily, but of the plainest viands,' what could a French cook do for such a king? He despised the French cook—despised, indeed, as we shall see, only too much the French element in all things whatsoever; violently discouraging periwigery, at that time full-blown at Versailles; 'seeing his salvation not in French sumptuosity, but in native German thrift'—thrift, honourable thrift—'verging,' indeed, as Mr Carlyle admits, 'towards avarice here and there, as poor human virtues usually lean to one side or the other.'

Meanwhile, how fares it with the little Fritz in this singular court? He was but three years old when his father set out on his one and only warlike expedition —that of Stralsund. Charles XII. of Sweden having 'reappeared after five years of eclipse,' invested Stralsund, and from thence 'menaced the world after his old fashion.' Ill-fated Swedish town! Stralsund, taken once before by 'Prussian sieging,' is taken again; and Friedrich Wilhelm returns to Berlin victorious from his first and last war—returns to meet with a little incident thoroughly to his mind; and all the more so because of some previous dissatisfaction; for the little Fritz—a very different child to what his father was—as Madame de Roucoulles (formerly De Montbail), who had had experience of both, could testify—had shewn small pleasure in 'loud drums and stiff men drawn up in rows.' His infantine history is by no means a turbulent one—no swallowing of shoe-buckles, or hanging out of third-story windows. He was 'one of the prettiest, vividest little boys, with eyes, mind, and ways of uncommon brilliancy—only he takes less to soldiering than the paternal heart could wish.' The greater the delight, therefore, when, on returning home, 'the earnest papa found the little Fritz, with Wilhelmina looking over him, strutting about, and assiduously beating a little drum.' No doubt it is an omen, and the paternal heart is glad and proud. 'A picture is painted to immortalise the incident by Pesne, a French painter of note, a picture approved by mankind then and now'—an engraving from which forms the frontispiece of Mr Carlyle's first volume. A lovely picture it is—the boy so royal with his bright vivid face and eager gesture, his sister with her pleasant demure smile; but we look at it with sadness, remembering how the love the father bore that little drummer changed, for long years, to cruel hatred; how court intrigues turned two wholesome hearts to gall; and how it needed nothing less than Death's solemn hand to clear their mutual eyesight from prejudice, and to set their affections freely flowing towards each other again.

It appears rather singular that Friedrich Wilhelm, with his rooted aversion to the French, should have so largely introduced the French element into his son's early education. Madame de Roucoulles was his governess, as we have seen; but then the father experimentally knew her worth. From Stralsund he now brought with him a young French gentleman, Duhan de Jaudun by name, and appointed him 'practical teacher' to the boy, two German noblemen filling the posts of head and sub tutor, but Duhan being the best beloved and the most influential of the three, though, with regard to them all, Fritz appears to have been 'an attached and attaching little boy.' As for Friedrich Wilhelm's own views on the important subject of the princely education, we have them given in a 'rough document,' enriched for us by Mr Carlyle's running commentary. Here are its leading features:

1. My son must be impressed with a proper love and fear of God, as the foundation and sole pillar of our temporal and eternal welfare. No false religions to be even named in his hearing; only a proper abhorrence of papistry is to be communicated to him.

2. He is to learn no Latin, only French and German, so as to write and speak both with brevity and propriety.

3. Let him learn arithmetic, mathematics, artillery, economy to the very bottom, ancient history only slightly, but the history of the last hundred and fifty years to the exactest pitch.

4. The prince is to be trained to act as officer and general, and to seek his sole glory in the sword.

'Excellent hints!' as Mr Carlyle pronounces, and who shall gainsay? But little could the luckless father imagine the germ of mischief that lay in that anti-Latin clause. If he thought of anything besides his own theories, he, perhaps, remembering his boyish days, fondly imagined that his son would thank him for it; but oh, the danger of rules that suggest infraction, fences that tempt to overleap!—oh, the difficulty of casting one human spirit into the self-same mould of another! Fritz cares little either for his father's favourite diversion of hunting, whether stag, boar, or fox and wolf hunting, rough-riding on *Wurstwagen* or sausage-cars—'most Spartan of vehicles—mere stuffed pole or sausage, on which you sit astride a dozen or two, defiant of wind and weather.' All this delights not him. 'Later, he would retire into some glade with musical comrades,' or 'converse with mamma and her ladies' at the very crisis of the sport, when the boar was actually being baited, or the stag of ten brought to bay. Effeminate tendencies these, according to Friedrich Wilhelm, and an increasing offence to him. Well, he may feed the boy on 'beer-soup,' give him but eighteenpence a week in pocket-money, prescribe the order of his lessons, the cut of his costume, nay, the very hours of his sleep, but he will never, never make him a fac-simile of himself. Could he but only relinquish the hope of doing so! Alas, alas!

Here are two little clouds no bigger indeed than a man's hand, but the horizon on which they rise will soon be black with storm. According to Wilhelmina —whose book Mr Carlyle pronounces the only one treating of Frederick's childhood which can be characterised as 'strictly human,' which he even calls a *veracious* book, 'due deduction being made for shrill female exaggeration—as say 25 per cent., or, in extreme cases, as much as 75'—according, then, to Wilhelmina, her brother was slow in learning; but this would appear to have been the case only in respect of certain branches he disliked, such as spelling, which he never did learn, or punctuation either, and grammar, which continued with him a hopeless mystery to the end. For Latin, on the contrary, he had a peculiar fancy! One day he and a subaltern preceptor, with their 'contraband apparatus of Latin grammar and dictionary on the table,' are caught in the fact—the Golden Bull of Kaiser Karl IV.—a document 350 years old, and venerable next to holy writ, in Friedrich Wilhelm's estimation—the subject of study. This the trembling tutor hastens to explain; but his majesty, in noway propitiated, flourishes that too-ready rattan of his. 'Dog, I will Golden Bull you!' cries he. The Latin lesson is at an end for that day. Curious, though, to observe that, throughout life, Frederick retained his love for the smattering of Latin he had thus secretly acquired, garnishing his writings with scraps often 'mouldy, and in a hitherto inexplicable condition.'

Here is another cloud. French fashions of all kinds, as we have seen, were obnoxious to the king, to whose taste 'close-cropping and a club' were dear. To the youth, on the other hand, 'with his bright eyes and blond locks,' hair combed out like a cockatoo, seemed decidedly preferable. At the age of fifteen, too, it is hard to brook interference in these personal matters; but there is no help for it, ruthless father standing by, court-surgeon with scissors and comb in hand. Fritz, who has from a very early age commanded a miniature soldier-company of nearly three hundred boys of his own age, and who now belongs to the Potsdam guards, shall conform to the army-regulations, and shall be close cropped as becomes a soldier! There are tears, they say, in the bright young eyes; but the thing has to be done, or at least to seem to be done; 'the judicious chirurgeons making a great show of clipping,' and fiercely combing back the obnoxious curls, but, nevertheless, leaving them capable of shaking out again in proper place and season. These, however, were alienating incidents, and father and son were fast learning to misunderstand and torment each other. Other children, too, rose round Friedrich Wilhelm, and all of them seem to him better, more dutiful, more promising than this Fritz—the heir—with his 'French fopperies, flutings, and cockatoo fashion of hair.' Meanwhile, Sophie Dorothée, loving all her children well, loves her eldest best, inevitably takes his part: so does Wilhelmina. The house is divided against itself; and a great scheme is brewing, dear to the maternal mind, full of bright promise as any apple of Sodom, which will complicate and aggravate all existing difficulties—the scheme, namely, of a double marriage, double alliance with England, agreeably to which the English Frederick, grandson of George I., shall marry Wilhelmina; and Fritz of Prussia, the Princess Amelia of England. Could anything sound more auspicious than this? Sophie Dorothée has nursed the project for more than a dozen years, all parties connected with it warmly agreeing. It is true that when her father is 'wafted across into England, into new and more complex conditions,' he is no longer so 'impressively eager as the Prussian queen, and when he gets back on a visit to his beloved Hanover, wishes rather to hunt than to make marriage treaties.' Friedrich Wilhelm, too, is more apathetic about the matter than could be wished. However, there comes at last a favourable juncture, and, according to Wilhelmina, the double marriage treaty was settled and signed in October 1723. But she was wrong as to the signing. 'Parliament had to be apprised,' time-taking formalities to be gone through; the treaty never *was* signed at all, though to the sanguine maternal mind it appeared as good as signed.

The maternal mind cannot foresee that 'the politics of most European cabinets will connect themselves' with this seeming simple and desirable plan, 'and send it wandering wide enough'—Kaiser Karl VI. clinging with true Hapsburg tenacity to the shadow of the crown of Spain; Elizabeth Farnese, actual queen of that country, demanding the renunciation of his shadowy claim, and still further demanding Parma and Padua, the kaiser's well-loved duchies, for Carlos her son; Kaiser Karl's second vast shadowy project, his pragmatic sanction, whereby heirs-male failing him, the imperial crown shall devolve upon his eldest daughter, Maria Theresa. What do these things appear to have to do with the double-marriage treaty? Why should not Sophie Dorothée be of good cheer as to its fulfilment? We shall see, after sundry diplomatic crises, Spain and Vienna—so long in direct antagonism—come to terms of close union, to the 'amazement, anger, and terror of the rest of Europe.' The balance of power has now to be readjusted.

France and England lay their heads together, and the treaty of Hanover is the result. Now, Friedrich Wilhelm, a man with such a valuable 'fighting apparatus' as an army of 60,000 best-drilled men—is indeed important in a Hanover treaty, and must be got to sign if possible; nor has he, for his part, any objection to help to trim the European ship, and right the unequal balance of power; but there is one point which touches him more closely, the reversion, after the death of the present owner, of Jülich and Berg, that valuable Cleve country. 'Perhaps England and France will, for a consideration, guarantee one's undoubted rights there.' They promise, but not 'too specifically.' We shall hear a good deal more about this Jülich and Berg question by and by. Meanwhile, the balance of power being righted, why not sign the double-marriage treaty at once?

One can fancy how distressing to Queen Sophie, whose 'whole heart was set with female fixity on the project,' her father's delays must have been. Neither were these delays pleasing to Friedrich Wilhelm, 'who is very capable of being hurt by slights, and who, at anyrate, dislikes to have loose thrums flying about.' Besides, there has been some cause of offence with regard to Friedrich Wilhelm's hobby, which last, small and harmless-looking when we heard of it before, has been growing portentously all these years, as hobbies will. 'Tall men, not for one regiment only, have become a necessary of life to the king—indispensable to him almost as his daily bread.' Not content with his home 'canton system of recruitment,' the third part of every regiment, it is decreed, 'shall consist of foreigners, men not born Prussians.' 'The consequence is, all countries, especially all German countries, are infested with a new species of predatory two-legged animals—Prussian recruiters.' 'Better not to be too tall in any country at present.' Even the 'ægis of the British constitution' fails sometimes to protect, though, for the most part, experience proves that the English are too well off for much to be done among them. Hanover, however, has grave cause of complaint; and George I. commences a system of 'decisive measures and even reprisals,' which by no means brighten the prospects of the double-marriage treaty; Friedrich Wilhelm absolutely refusing to dismount from his hobby, though riding him henceforth under much sorrow, under showers of anger and ridicule. However, the double-marriage treaty did not succumb to the hobby, but had other and more inveterate foes to contend with, as we shall endeavour briefly to shew. Meanwhile, the crown-prince is formally enrolled major among the Potsdam giant guards, and Baron Grumkow, a bribable man, is in the ascendant in the tobacco-parliament or *tabagie*, an institution to which it is now high time to refer.

'Friedrich Wilhelm never had the least shadow of a constitutional parliament, nor even a privy council, as we understand it;' but he had evening smoking-parties (*tabagies*), where 'state consultations, in a fitful, informal way, took place, and the weightiest affairs, by dexterous management, cunning insinuation and manœuvring, from those that understood the art and the place, could be bent this way or that.' Now Grumkow was essentially at home in 'that dim, hot element;' and Grumkow, be it remembered, was a bribable man. Meanwhile, there are 'loose thrums' and troubles enough at the imperial court, Kaiser Karl having been thrown into fresh perplexity, nay, extreme embarrassment, by the Hanover treaty; all the sea-powers against him, nothing for him but a capricious Spanish queen. Were it not well to detach Friedrich Wilhelm with his 'fighting apparatus' from those 'Hanover confederates, and win him over to our side?' An excellent expedient, only a little dangerous. Who shall muzzle the royal bear? Graf von Seckendorf, imperial ordnance-master, practical diplomatist, conscientious Protestant, comes forward ready to try—he is the man.

Accordingly, on the 11th of May 1726, *tabagie* being held in Berlin palace, and the king sitting smoking at the window, 'a square-built gentleman of military cut is seen strolling over the *schossplatz*, pensively recreating himself in the yellow sunlight. 'Who is that?' inquires the king. Grumkow cautiously replies that he thinks it must be Count Seckendorf from Vienna, passing rapidly towards Denmark, led round this way by anxiety to see the great review at Tempelhof, the day after to-morrow. How innocent and accidental all this seemed! Who would suppose that Grumkow, 'once clear for king George,' is detached from his interests by a little imperial pension of L.500 to begin with; and Seckendorf here by contrivance, not accident at all. His unsuspicious Prussian majesty has not an idea of the kind as he puts his head out of the window, and beckons Seckendorf up with his own royal hand.

Once installed in the *tabagie*, Seckendorf becomes prime favourite there—'a captivating talker, solid for religion, for the rights of Germany against intrusive French and others,' and with a capacity of 'curiously distilling any lie in his religious alembics, till it become tolerable, nay, palatable to the conscience.' At this crisis of the history, Mr Carlyle, breaking out into generous indignation at the prospect before the unconscious Friedrich Wilhelm, breathes a heartfelt wish, which he has often occasion to repeat, that Grumkow and Seckendorf—'black artists of the first quality,' could have both been 'well hanged at this stage of their career.' But it was not so written in the book of fate.

Seckendorf and Grumkow make good use of their *tabagie* privileges. In less than five months from that May sunset, a treaty of Wusterhausen is signed, whereby Friedrich Wilhelm silently drops that of Hanover, and explicitly steps over to the Kaiser's side; in return for which, the Kaiser engages in 'circuitous chancery language,' to be helpful in that great matter of Jülich and Berg; not, indeed, that there ever was any performance of this promise, or even any intention of it; but still, by 'preternatural methods,' the majesty of Prussia is kept steady to the Kaiser, and well divided from the English; and Friedrich Wilhelm, taken possession of by these two lying spirits, grows more and more estranged from the double-marriage treaty, on which Queen Sophie's heart is more and more set. Could she but have given up the hope of it! 'It is greatly wise to recognise the impossible when it presents itself; but who of men is there, much more who of women, that can always do this?' At all events, Sophie Dorothée cannot; she will try yet further the resources of female diplomacy. Meanwhile, the crown-prince, residing habitually at Potsdam, 'begins to be noted for his sprightly sense, love of literature, and ingenuous ways,' sometimes appearing at the tabagie, but smoking little there; finding life, Mr Carlyle surmises, very heavy—the winged Psyche much imprisoned in the pipe-clay element—reading many French books, new and old; among the new, no doubt reading the *Henriade* of M. Arouet, junior, otherwise named Voltaire, and, worst of all, growing sadly out of favour with his father, who is getting soured, what with demoniacal possession by Grumkow and Seckendorf, double-marriage troubles, French tendencies in his son, and domestic opposition, secret and open, to his inflexible will. And so, for the present, we leave him, with the dark intimation, that 'worse days are coming.'

A PROLONGED WATER EXCURSION.

Early in the day, on one fine morning in July, a pretty row-boat, well furnished with cushions, shawls, and hampers of provisions, was pushed off from the steep shingle beach of B——, a little fishing village on the coast of South Devon. Seated in it were two little girls of about thirteen and twelve years old, clad in plain cotton frocks, and straw hats; and four fine lads, ranging from about seventeen to eleven. The eldest of the boys was Bruce Grey, and the youngest of the girls his sister Mabel. They were of Scotch family, and, at the time of our story, had come, with their father and mother, to spend a few weeks in B——, for the sake of the society of Mrs Bruce's brother, Dr Peyton, who, with his wife and family, were residing there. The other young people in the boat were Emily, Horace, James, and Eustace Peyton, Dr Peyton's children, and consequently cousins of the Greys.

The little boat darted lightly over the bright blue water, impelled by the vigorous strokes of the active young oarsmen, and soon reached a small wooden pier that jutted out into the sea. There they inquired of a fisherman for a sailor whom they expected to meet there, and who was to accompany them on their excursion; but learning, to their evident vexation, that he had gone off at dawn to a distant port, leaving them a message to that effect, they turned away, and, resting on their oars, entered into a short discussion, which ended in their rowing on towards a distant reef of rocks called Rock-end. The man walked away from the pier as soon as he had delivered his message, and did not see that, after rowing in that direction for a few minutes, they turned and took a directly opposite one. Their plan had been to spend the day at Rock-end, but as the coast was known to be dangerous at that part, they had only obtained permission to do so on condition that a trusty sailor, who usually accompanied the Peytons in their excursions, went with them. On finding that he had failed of his promise, the children decided on changing their plan, and consequently struck across the bay, rounded the south headland, and were soon out of sight from the port. The cloud that had overcast the bright young faces of the children, when they found that they could not go to Rock-end, soon passed away, and amidst chat, and laughter, and song, they pushed on to a little cove about two miles from their home, in the opposite direction from that they were supposed to have taken, and here they all landed. It was a remarkable spot; a beach of white pebbles of considerable depth, but little breadth, ran up under immense red sandstone cliffs, in which were many caverns, of no great extent, but sufficient to afford shelter from sun and rain. The cliffs were quite perpendicular, and on the north jutted out so far as to almost shut out the view of the sea from those who were on the shore, and of the cove from all passing boats.

It was near low-water when they landed, and they were obliged to push the boat into a little channel between two rocks, in order to put the girls ashore dry-shod. And just as the last of the party was landed, a few large drops of rain fell, and bidding Emily and Mabel hasten into the shelter of a cavern, and take little Eustace with them, the elder boys hastily disembarked the hampers of provisions; and, fearing lest the shawls and cushions should be wetted, Bruce hastily snatched them from the boat, and handed them to James and Horace, to carry to a cavern where they might be kept dry. He was himself on the point of leaping into the boat to take her round to a place where she might be moored in safety, when a sudden scream from Mabel, who had slipped into a rather deep tide-pool, arrested his attention, and he sprang away over the rocks to her aid, in his haste quite forgetting the boat, which lay free in the channel; before he could return, after assisting his little sister to rise, and helping her over the slippery rocks to the beach, the boat was many yards from the shore, and beating rapidly out to sea. It was an awkward business, but they did not at first see how awkward. None of them could swim; the cove was so placed that it was most unlikely that any boat would pass near enough to see and relieve them, and there was no possible escape from it except by water. Boys are, however, proverbially hopeful and free from thought for the future; so Horace and Bruce, who alone knew of the misfortune, looked lightly on it, and comforting themselves with the assurance that some one would be sure to see them, and pick them up, they agreed that they would not say a word about it to the rest. 'The girls will be in a desperate fright,' said Horace, 'if they know that the boat's gone, so we won't tell them;' Bruce, who, however, was not at heart quite so well satisfied, as his cousin, fell into Horace's wish, and taking up a hamper each, they had soon set them and themselves high and dry in a moderately roomy cavern under the cliff.

The shower was soon over; and then the young people betook themselves to their different amusements; some fishing for shrimps in the tide-pools, and some climbing for the beautiful ferns, which they found in abundance in the crevices of the cliff, and the bright yellow blossoms of the long-horned poppy *Glaucium lateum;* when tired of these and other pursuits, the whole party grouped themselves under the shadow of the rocks, and proceeded to unpack their baskets, and lay out their dinner on the smooth sand, and then partook with great enjoyment of the refreshment, without the least idea of the trouble and distress that hung over them.

Bruce, who was older and more thoughtful than Horace, at last began to get very uneasy. He had carefully watched the sea, and not a single boat had come in sight; he had also carefully explored the whole extent of the beach, in hope of discovering some part of the cliff that one of them might scale, and go to send help to the rest; but there was none. The mighty wall that shut them in presented no point at which the most adventurous might reach the top in safety, and the upper part of the cliff overhung itself so as to make it impossible for any one to pass it. He called Horace aside, and the two talked the matter over; but Horace was bright and gay, would listen to no croakings, as he called them, and only seemed to rejoice in the fun; so his cousin agreed not to speak of the dilemma they were in; and the boys returned to the rest of the party, who, full of glee and spirits, were chatting and laughing gaily as they scrambled about on the rocks, or chased each other over the sand.

The hours passed on, and still no help appeared, so that Horace himself began to be anxious on account of the girls, although he said for themselves it would be 'excellent fun to stay there all night.' It was, however, now necessary to tell the rest of the party of the mischance that had occurred; and this was accordingly done. The first thought of all was for the anxiety that their prolonged absence would cause in their respective homes. They knew that no one had an idea where they were, and that, consequently, there was no hope that any one could be sent to look for them; but for this drawback, all the children save

Mabel agreed in delighting in the novelty of spending a whole night on the shore; and as it was very warm, and they had plenty of food, there would really have been no great evil in doing so. But Mabel was timid, and more delicate than her merry cousin; besides which, she had shivered and felt unwell, possibly from the effects of her dip in the tide-pool; and the little girl longed for her mother and her bed, and so she began to cry, though silently. Bruce drew her gently aside, and, sitting on the shingle, placed her on his knee, and resting her head on his shoulder, talked lovingly to her of the sure protection of her Heavenly Father, and of the duty she owed to the rest not in any way to add to their difficulties by her depression. He told her rather to try to forget herself, and be a help and comfort to the rest; and Mabel, who had been used to think of others rather than of herself, soon succeeded in following her brother's counsel; and she and he were soon in close conference with the others, who were already engaged in holding 'a committee of ways and means.' The first thing was to inspect their supplies, and these, happily, were more abundant than they would have been had the little party not been made up from the members of two families, each of whom had contributed handsomely to the general stock. Mrs Grey's hamper had produced a large plain plum-cake, a tin of biscuits, a good piece of cold lamb, and a loaf of bread, besides a bottle of ginger-wine. Mrs Peyton's had supplied a good large loaf, a piece of cold beef, and a piece of cheese, together with salt, and some knives and cups. They were to get water at Rock-end from a stream that flowed down the rocks; and, luckily for them, they had found a similar, though very small trickling stream, bursting out from the cliff at the cove. On these supplies there had, however, been a sharp attack at mid-day; and though a large proportion of the food remained, amply sufficient to give them all two more good meals, it was wisely agreed that they had better partake sparingly of it, as the time of their release was become so uncertain. It was a happy thing that the shower had induced the boys to land the shawls and cushions, since they would provide bedding for the girls; and the boys agreed that they should do very well sleeping in the soft loose sand, after the fashion of Belzoni and his friends when they were digging for the temple of Ysamboul. They *liked* it, they said; and boldly protested that, except for the anxiety that their parents would feel, and for the sake of the girls, they would rather be there, than ignobly in their beds at home.

A dry and tolerably roomy cavern had been selected, and the boys had busied themselves in heaping sand and stones in front of it, so as to leave only a narrow doorway; and this formed a shelter from the evening air, which began to be rather chilling; and when Bruce had mounted on Horace's shoulders, and with the aid of a couple of forks stuck into the soft sandstone, had suspended an old shawl as a curtain, and the other boys, with Mabel and Emily, had arranged the shawls and cushions as a bed, it was allowed on all hands that things began to look cheering, and that to sit there and watch the beautiful full moon riding in her majesty in the heavens, and casting her bright wake on the sea, was indeed delightful; and if now and then a thought of home pressed on any heart, it was put aside for the sake of others; and the little party chatted most cheerfully until they thought it time to eat their supper and prepare for their night's rest. Before they parted, little Mabel whispered to her brother: 'Shall not we have prayers, Bruce? I do not like to lie down in this strange place without asking God to take care of us all.'

'Right, darling,' replied Bruce, kissing her; and then he told the rest what she had said, and asked if Horace or Emily would repeat a psalm, or part of one of the Gospels, which was accordingly done.

When evening came, and the children had not returned, Dr Peyton became at first displeased at their neglect of rule and breach of promise, but, as time wore on and they did not appear, anxiety began to displace the former feeling, and he set out with Mrs Peyton to walk to the quay, in hopes of hearing something of the party. Near his door he encountered Mr Grey, who was coming to inquire if his boy and girl had arrived, and been detained at their uncle's, and, finding that such was not the case, he joined the doctor and his wife, and they all walked together to the shore.

And now, for the first time, the parents learned that the sailor who was to have gone in charge of the boat had failed of his appointment, and that the children had gone alone, and, as they believed, to the dangerous reef for which the party had been planned; for the fisherman who had given them the sailor's message, had seen them start in that direction, and had not watched them long enough to see that after a few minutes they had turned back. And now, intense anxiety arose in all their minds. Mr Grey instantly started in one boat, and Dr Peyton in another, to seek for them at different parts of the shore, and went straight across to Rock-end. Of course, the search was in vain; and when, on the evening of the next day, the boat in which the party had gone was discovered on some rocks at a considerable distance beyond Rock-end with her sides stove in, and no other trace of the party could be found, it was believed that all had been drowned, and the agony of both families became intense. To seek for the dead bodies now became the employment of half the population of the village, for the Peytons were much beloved, and every one felt for the bereaved parents. Bruce and Mabel were the only children of their house; and, though the Peytons had two little ones left, their mourning was as deep as if such had not been the case.

The days passed sadly on. It was Thursday when the children had set out, on Friday evening the boat had been found, and now Monday had arrived; and though Mr Grey and Dr Peyton had spent the greater part of each day in exploring the shore, no tidings had been obtained. Their researches had all been made to the west of the town, as in that direction lay Rock-end, and there the boat had been found. Once only they tried the eastern side, and then they must have passed within gunshot of the children, though neither party perceived the other, and after that they kept on the more likely side.

And how fared it with the little desolate children during these sad days? Of course, the food which they had taken with them, though rich provision for one day, was wholly insufficient for six people during several days; and though they had husbanded their resources with a self-denial beyond their age, and had helped them out with shrimps which they caught and contrived to boil in the tin that had held their biscuits, and with cockles, and limpets, and periwinkles, these were, by the end of the fourth day, entirely exhausted. The boys had, it is true, shot a gull and one or two other sea-birds; but when they had contrived to cook them by boiling some of the flesh in their biscuit-tin, and broiling other parts on heated stones, they found them to be so intolerably tough and fishy, that no one could eat a morsel whilst anything else remained with which they could allay their hunger. These relics were now produced, and, with some shell-fish, grilled, after a fashion, in some large cockle-shells, formed their sole food this fourth day of their constrained abode at the cove. They had from time to time made a fire from the dried weed and drift-wood that they had gathered; but their supplies of both were so scanty, that they were obliged to be very sparing in that luxury; and the delicately nurtured children could not as yet induce themselves to eat the limpets and other shell-fish uncooked, so that they had begun to feel very sad at their condition and prospects. The weather was very hot and dry, and they all felt grievously the loss of their home-comforts, such as tea, milk, and other beverages, as well as of their beds. They had all been as ingenious in resource as could be expected, and had procured a little salt from the evaporation of sea-water in large shells; and some dulse had been gathered at low-water, which was voted delicious; but of course in a narrow strip of beach walled in by high cliffs such as that which they occupied, they had little opportunity of practising desert-island expedients. There were no trees or shrubs, no roots or fruits, and after the first two days their fire had to be made from chips hacked with their knives from the oars, which had luckily been thrown out of the boat before she drifted.

On the fourth night, then, the children lay down to sleep in a most disconsolate state. It had been Sunday, and their hearts had been full of grief on account of the afflictions which they knew their parents must be suffering for their sakes, as well as for their own disastrous position. Still they slept, as children do even in the times of deepest sorrow, and awoke in the morning to find that a new trial awaited them. The little stream, which had lessened in its flow from day to day, was gone. It had quite dried up, and not a drop of water could be obtained!

And now the hearts of all began to utterly fail them.

'Bruce,' said Emily, 'suppose you and Horace were to fire your guns together once in every minute, as ships do at sea when in distress. There may be people near, and they may hear!'

Bruce demurred, lest the little powder they had left should be exhausted; but all agreed that it would be useless to kill birds if water was not to be had; they could not live without that: so the idea was adopted.

Sad and solemn was the feeling of each heart as the first, and second, and third, and fourth shots were fired, and deep and earnest were the prayers which each young heart poured out for deliverance. The guns were raised to give the fifth signal, and but one more charge of powder remained for each. They were raised, and then suddenly both were thrown on the beach, and 'O look!' and 'Thank God!' was eagerly uttered as they pointed upwards. All the children started to their feet, and looking in the direction indicated, beheld the figures of a man and a boy looking at them.

The signal had not failed. The cliff was too lofty for their words to be audible to those above, but the man seemed at once to perceive their position; and it afterwards appeared that he had heard the sound of a gun two days before, and on looking over into the cove, had seen the children, and supposed them to have just landed for a morning's amusement, and in consequence thought no more of them; but that when he heard their signals, he bethought him of the truth, and on seeing the young people still there, felt sure that some accident had stranded them. As soon as he had made his presence known, the man ran hastily off, and the boy with him; but soon a woman appeared; and after throwing down to them some cold potatoes and slices of coarse bread, stood watching the poor starved children as they greedily devoured what, after the fare of the last few days, seemed to them delicious diet.

It was now but a few minutes before the splash of oars and the voices of men proclaimed that deliverance was near; and then a boat with a couple of men entered the cove; and with unspeakable joy and thankfulness the six wearied, weather-stained young creatures who had, half an hour before, doubted of ever again reaching their home, were afloat on the blue summer wave, and on the way to their parents.

We have not space to enlarge on the joy of both families, when one of those who were still out searching for the dead bodies of the lost ones rushed in breathless haste to announce that Job Styles the fisherman, and his sons, were at that moment rowing across to the quay in his boat, with the whole party alive and apparently well. Nor need we expatiate on the happy thankfulness of the rescued children as each in turn was pressed in the arms of their parents.

DONATI'S COMET.

For some time past, as the public is generally aware, astronomers expected the reappearance of a notable comet which last appeared before the eyes of Europe in the reign of the Bloody Mary. While this was looked for, *another comet* presented itself, which we all saw pass across the northern sky in September and October last, with such a brilliancy of nucleus and such an extent of tail, as had only been paralleled to living eyes in this part of the earth in the case of the famous comet of 1811. This recent visitant of our skies—distinguished as *Donati's Comet*—was first observed by that astronomer at Florence on the 2d of June, as a faint nebulous object. Announced by him, it was speedily caught up by other observers, and in due time, but while still a good deal more than 100,000,000 of miles distant, it came within the ken of the naked eye. On the 13th of September, it had approached within 120,000,000 miles; and Mr Hind, acting as cometic interpreter, published the diameter of the nucleus as 3000 miles, and the length of the tail 15,000,000 miles. On that same day, it happened that the temperature was 85 degrees in the shade, extraordinarily high for September; and popular opinion was pretty unanimous in referring the cause of the great heat to the comet.

As the evenings grew longer and darker, the comet came nearer and nearer, finally presenting a magnificent appearance, as it stretched over not less than thirty degrees of the sky, or a full third of the space between the horizon and zenith. On the 5th of October, the foremost extremity passed over Arcturus, the principal star in the constellation Bootes, the nucleus being just a little below the star. The passage of the tail across the star occupied nearly an hour, and hundreds of beholders were then enabled to satisfy themselves that a star can be seen through the tail of a comet. Well might previous observers wonder what sort of matter that can be which is dense enough to send light through millions of miles to the earth, and yet so thin that it does not hide a star. Five days later, at midnight of the 10th of October, the comet was at its nearest, being then not more than 51,000,000 miles from us; but its hour of setting fell earlier every evening, and before the end of the month, it went down with the sun, leaving only the extremity of its tail to be seen in the twilight. Finally, this disappeared, and the comet of 1858 was seen no more.

Let us try to sum up the observations made upon this brilliant stranger; but first we may advert to a few particulars regarding its class which have been ascertained in modern times.

Of all the comets hitherto seen, the number observed and recorded amounts to about six hundred, and the orbits of one-third of these have been calculated. If Tycho Brahé was the first to shew that comets were not mere meteors of the terrestrial atmosphere, because he found that they travelled beyond the moon, Newton was the first to prove that they moved in elliptic orbits. Comets were formerly believed to be celestial waifs and strays, which appeared but once, and then were lost for ever; the fact ascertained by Newton shewed that they belonged to our own system. Halley, with fruitful genius, following out Newton's idea, calculated the orbit of the comet which, from his observations thereupon in 1682, is known by his name, and found its period to be about seventy-five years; identifying the comet with the one which had appeared in 1606 and 1531. Here was an important step gained; knowledge of the past enabled him to look into the future, and he predicted that, allowing for the retarding influence of Jupiter upon the comet, it would revisit the earth at the end of 1758 or beginning of 1759—an interval of more than seventy-six years. The comet, as is well known, did reappear in April 1759, and once again in due course in 1835.

Even if a person could make observations of two appearances of the same comet, seventy-six years is a long time to wait to detect changes and delays. But there are comets which return many times to the astronomer who lives out the threescore years and ten, and science has availed itself of these to prove its methods right with regard to the long periods. Encke's comet, named after the astronomer at Berlin, performs its journey round the sun in three years and four months; it has been frequently seen, and its return is looked for with as much certainty as an eclipse. Its last visit was in 1858. This comet which, owing to its nearness to the sun, is rarely to be seen without a telescope, enables astronomers to verify an important conclusion which they had come to concerning a cosmical phenomenon—namely, that the regions of space are pervaded by an ether which, though of extreme levity, does nevertheless exert an influence on objects moving through it. Hence the times of comets should grow shorter and shorter; and this is found to be the case with Encke's—its time is shortened two hours and thirty-six minutes each revolution, or one day in 2500, so that in course of time it will fall into the sun. Another observation, verified also by the same means, is that comets diminish in size as they approach the sun, and increase as they withdraw. The last published volume of the *Jahrbuch* of the observatory at Berlin, contains a valuable paper by Professor Encke on that very subject—the existence of a resisting medium throughout space.

It is, however, desirable to notice that Professor Encke's views on this point do not meet with universal acceptance. Bessel, whose name stands in the foremost rank of astronomers, shews that the supposition of an ether is not the only solution of the problem; that it may be explained by the theory on which Laplace explains the acceleration of the moon's motion. And M. Faye of Paris, taking the same ground of argument, makes it appear that to suppose an ether, an imponderable, uninfluenced by the sun or planets, is a fallacy; that if such an ether existed, it would be visible, and would of necessity revolve round the sun in common with the whole solar system.

Biela's is also a comet of short period—six years and three quarters; it has been seen three times since 1832. On its approach to the sun, it underwent some of the convulsive changes which comets experience at their perihelion, and broke into two, presenting the appearance of two small comets, each with a tail, travelling at the same rate. Faye's comet, discovered in 1843, has also a comparatively short period; it was seen for the second time in 1851.

A brilliant comet, known as Lexell's, appeared in 1770; its period was computed at five years and a half; but it has not been observed since. The explanation is, that as Jupiter by its attraction had shortened, so had it, by another exercise of attraction, lengthened the comet's time; but how much must remain uncertain until Lexell's shall be once more recognised and observed.

A comet is a gaseous body, having a tendency to consolidate mostly in the head or nucleus, while the lightest particles fly off from the side furthest from the sun, and form the tail. Thin as is their constitution, they reflect light. Arago discovered this fact by one of his ingenious experiments in 1819. The light coming from the comet then visible was polarised; and as light is not polarised unless reflected, it follows that comets reflect light. That the nucleus is gaseous as well as the tail, is said to be proved by stars having been actually seen through it; but more observations of this fact are wanted. Of the tenuity of the tail there can be no doubt, after what we all saw last October; and how singular that tenuity must be, for observers know to their vexation that a thin fog or light cloud will hide a star, and yet Sir J. Herschel saw a cluster of stars through 50,000 miles of a comet's tail, without any sensible diminution of their brightness. The nucleus is commonly surrounded by a *coma* or hairy-like nebulosity, between which and the bright central portion there is an encircling dark ring, or atmospheric space.

Now for the observations on Donati's comet—alas that they should be so easily summed up!

It is scarcely necessary to say that the gaseous nature of cometary matter is fully confirmed by these observations; and that Arago's experiments on the polarisation of the light have been repeated. Sir William Herschel thought the head of the comet of 1811 to be a hollow hemisphere or basin, with the open side towards us. Similar appearances were seen in the comet of 1858, but more numerous, as many as eight encircling rims having been observed from first to last between September 23 and October 15; and, like the former, its tail was produced by two lines of light shooting out from each side of the rim, brightest on the side towards which the comet was moving; and between the two lines the hazy, feathery light spread itself out, filling the whole interval, except the dark stripe which more or less distinctly runs along the centre of a comet's tail.

Professor Govi, a colleague of Donati's, in his observations, found the plane of polarisation identical with the axis of the tail, or with a line drawn from the sun to the comet, and regards this as a convincing proof that the light comes from the sun. The dark stripe in the tail, supposed by some to indicate a hollow cone, he considers as the shadow of the nucleus thrown along its gaseous train. His observation of the plane of polarisation is confirmed by Herr Prazmowski, who noticed the same fact from the observatory at Warsaw. M. Porro took a photograph of the spectrum thrown by the comet, and that from Arcturus, for the purpose of comparison, and found no difference in the rays, or in their several intervals. He considers that the cosmical matter of comets exists in two different states, both intermediate between the ether above referred to, and gas, and that the substance of the nucleus differs as much from its envelope as our globe from its own atmosphere. And we are to understand that the comet does not reflect light as a mirror does, but by vibrations or undulations produced by the influence of the sun, in the same way as light is reflected by our atmosphere. Reasoning from analogy, the nucleus should be spherical in form, with a tendency to elongation, or to become oval as it approaches the sun;

and so far as observations go, this change of form really takes place. The comet was seen to assume the oval shape, to have one of its extremities brighter than the other, and to shift its position from near the ring on the north to near the ring on the south. Some of these views are supported by Zantedeschi of Venice, who concludes nebulæ, comets, and perhaps the zodiacal light, to be composed of gases in the intermediate state.

Another notion, suggested by observations of Donati's comet, is, that we cannot explain its nature unless we admit a twofold quality in gravitation, that is, attraction and repulsion, as prevails in other natural phenomena. The comet, therefore, having entered the photosphere of the sun, there parts with the property by which it was drawn, and receives an opposite one by which it is driven off into space.

M. Faye shews that a reciprocal attraction among all its particles is manifested by the comet. When first seen, the particles or molecules were in close contact, arranged in concentric rings more and more dense around the central nucleus. Approach to the sun appears to counterbalance or destroy this attraction, hence the throwing off at intervals of the concentric rings, not, however, as complete circles, but with a break in the rear where they stretched out and merged into the tail. He thinks that as the earth has tides, so a tide is produced in a comet by the influence of the sun, but to an extent almost incredibly greater, by reason of the extreme change that takes place in the comet's distance from the sun: only, from some cause as yet unknown, the tide is all on the side furthest from the sun, or where we see the tail. He says, moreover, that the matter of the tail flew off from the nucleus at the rate of eight leagues in a second—the speed at which the earth travels in its orbit; and the force by which this effect is produced he describes, for want of a precise term, as solar radiation. This force is alike amazing and mysterious. What can it be which, in so short a time, sends off a train of light millions of miles in length? We know of nothing comparable except lightning; and seeing that electricity and magnetism, heat and light, are allied manifestations, we shall perhaps find, with the progress of knowledge, that by their means the explanation will be arrived at.

In his latest notes upon the subject, read before the Academy of Sciences at Paris, M. Faye remarks: 'Cometary phenomena are due to a repulsive force which resides in the sun, and which, for matters reduced to excessive tenuity, overcomes gravitation.'

Bessel, in his discussion of the question, attributes to the rays of the sun 'a property by which polar forces—energetic attractions and repulsions—are generated in the interior of a comet's mass; but he has not yet been able to name this property, although he has assigned to the special action with which he thus endows the solar rays, an intensity almost double that of the enormous mass which emits them.

The conclusions of English astronomers agree in most respects with those made on the continent. Mr Airy, the astronomer-royal, found proofs of polarisation in the head and tail of the comet, and satisfied himself that the plane of polarisation is the same as observed by Govi and Prazmowski. He describes the nucleus as formed of concentric discs. Professor Challis, of the observatory at Cambridge, saw what he describes as hoods surrounding the nucleus, and the nucleus itself brighter on the right side—as seen in the telescope—till October 2, and after that date on the left side. Rev. T. W. Webb of Hereford says: 'The two streams which formed the tail were for a long time unequal in breadth, but were never observed to change sides, so as to indicate rotation.' Mr Selby of Spalding observed sudden and momentary jets dart from the nucleus, and concludes it to be 'a dense body, emitting igneous or gaseous emanations.' Mr Waterston explains the formation of the tail by the centrifugal power of the sun's rays upon molecules free from the force of cohesion.

Full as this summary is, it cannot be regarded as more than a glance at the subject. The astronomers generally have published only an abstract of their observations and conclusions, reserving for careful discussion and consideration the papers on the comet, with drawings illustrative of all its developments, which will be printed in the *Transactions* of scientific societies in the course of 1859. When these appear, we shall become acquainted with all that is known on the interesting subject.

Some observers have contended that the tail of a comet has no real existence, but is a mere ocular illusion. Tycho thought it was nothing more than the sun's rays shining through an opening in the nucleus. The true explanation is probably that, the comet being gaseous, the gas condenses when far away from the sun; then coming into view, it is seen as a nebulous mass without a tail: it comes nearer, and the tail begins to develop itself, and the comet grows smaller, as if the heat of the sun caused the gas to evaporate, flying off from the envelope of the nucleus, and so forming the tail, and with greater amplitude after the perihelion is past. By and by the tail disappears, and the comet goes off into space to fulfil its mission, until, obedient to the great law of attraction, it returns once more to the glorious centre.

Beyond the facts here set forth, there is little or nothing but surmise in what has been written concerning comets. Newton thought their use might be to fall now and then into a planet, and refresh it with a new term of existence; but to prove the notion true or false, would be alike difficult in the present state of our knowledge. We conclude, therefore, with a passage from a communication to the Astronomical Society by Admiral Smyth; having seen both, he thinks the comet of 1811 the finer of the two. 'As a mere sight-object,' he says, 'the branched tail was of greater interest, the nucleus with its "head-veil" was more distinct, and its circumpolarity was a fortunate incident for gazers. But recollect that in these remarks I mean nothing disrespectful to the comet of Donati. On the contrary, with those exceptions, it is one of the most beautiful objects I have ever seen in the heavens.'

CONVERSATION HOLMES.

If the last book* of Mr Oliver Wendell Holmes is to be taken as a fair sample of his powers of breakfast table-talk, he had better stick to that for the future, and give up the writing of poetry. He has, indeed, written one really good stirring ballad (*On Lending a Silver Punch-bowl*), but he has not written many; whereas in this volume there are many good things, and better than we should have ever given him credit for. We do not speak of the apophthegms plentifully bestrewed upon these pages—ranging from the moral, 'Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all,' to the social, 'Shabby gentility has nothing so characteristic as its hat. There is always *an unnatural calmness about its nap*, and an unwholesome gloss suggestive of a wet brush'—because apophthegms can be constructed by persons who have the knack of making them, as easily as charades; but the really excellent metaphorical parallels are worth quoting from. Here, for instance, is balm to elders and others, who must needs suffer under tedious ministers twice, or even thrice a week; in the information that a hopelessly dull discourse does nevertheless (as electricians would say) develop strong mental currents.

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* *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-table.* Edinburgh: A. Strahan & Co.

'I am ashamed to think with what accompaniments and variations and *fioriture* I have sometimes followed the droning of a heavy speaker—not willingly, for my habit is reverential—but as a necessary result of a slight continuous impression on the senses and the mind, which kept both in action without furnishing the food they required to work upon. If you ever saw a crow with a king-bird after him, you will get an image of a dull speaker and a lively listener. The bird in sable plumage flaps heavily along his straightforward course, while the other sails round him, over him, under him, leaves him, comes back again, tweaks out a black feather, shoots away once more, never losing sight of him, and finally reaches the crow's perch at the same time the crow does, having cut a perfect labyrinth of loops, and knots, and spirals, while the slow fowl was painfully working from one end of his straight line to the other.'

And again, here is an admirable metaphorical lesson, which, if it had been only read in time by a certain popular author, would perhaps have prevented him from getting into a squabble with a smaller man, as well as into the newspapers and a law-court:

'If a fellow attacked my opinions in print, would I reply? Not I. Do you think I don't understand what my friend, the professor, long ago called the *hydrostatic paradox of controversy?*

'Don't know what that means?—Well, I will tell you. You know, that, if you had a bent tube, one arm of which was of the size of a pipe-stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as in the other. Controversy equalises fools and wise men in the same way—*and the fools know it.*

'No, but I often read what they say about other people. There are about a dozen phrases that all come tumbling along together, like the tongs, and the shovel, and the poker, and the brush, and the bellows, in one of those domestic avalanches that everybody knows. If you get one, you get the whole lot.'

How true that is; and what an example of the latter part of it have we in this country recently witnessed in yet another eminent case. In America, where dirt is still cheaper, to judge by the reckless manner in which it is flung about by the public press, such remarks must be still more striking than to us.

Mr Holmes is supposed to deliver his autocratic opinions to the various company of the boarding-house at which he resides, who are representative persons, and severally well described. It is no wonder that only some few should remain 'balancing teaspoons on the edges of cups, twirling knives, or tilting upon the hind-legs of their chairs until their heads reached the wall, where they left gratuitous advertisements of various popular cosmetics,' when he describes the process of making verses in the following transcendental manner: 'A lyric conception, my friends, hits me like a bullet in the forehead. I have often had the blood drop from my cheeks when it struck, and felt that I turned as white as death. Then comes a creeping as of centipedes running down the spine—then a gasp and a great jump of the heart—then a sudden flush and a beating in the vessels of the head—then a long sigh—and the poem is written.'

Whether the sigh is for the ideas, the jumps of the heart for the rhythm, and the centipedes for the number of feet, the poet does not particularise; but *Astræa and Other Poems* (sins of our author's youth) must have taken a good deal out of Mr Oliver Wendell Holmes's constitution, if they were all composed under the above painful circumstances. We are bound to shew, however, that with all this arrogance of sublimity, he can see the ridiculous side of the poetical character as well as another. He must surely have been a magazine editor himself at one period of his life, for in what other capacity could he have picked up this knowledge of the aspirants for the laurel, the youthful toilers up the Periodical Parnassus? He has always striven, he says, to be gentle with even the most hopeless cases (of the poetic disease); but his experience has not been encouraging; and this is the usual type of it: 'X. Y., æt. 18, a cheaply got-up youth, with narrow jaws, and broad, bony, cold, red hands, having been laughed at by the girls in his village, falls to souling and controlling, and youthing and truthing, in the newspapers. Sends me some strings of verses, candidates for the Orthopedic Infirmary, all of them, in which I learn for the millionth time one of the following facts: either that something about a chime is sublime, or that something about time is sublime, or that something about a chime is concerned with time, or that something about a rhyme is sublime or concerned with time or with a chime. Wishes my opinion of the same, with advice as to his future course.

'What shall I do about it? Tell him the whole truth, and send him a ticket of admission to the Institution for Idiots and Feeble-minded Youth? One doesn't like to be cruel, and yet one hates to lie. Therefore one softens down the ugly central fact of donkeyism; recommends study of good models; that writing verse should be an incidental occupation only, not interfering with the hoe, the needle, the lapstone, or the ledger; and, above all, that there should be no hurry in printing what is written. Not the least use in all this. The poetaster who has tasted type is done for. He is like the man who has once been a candidate for the presidency.'

Ah, reader, what a photograph that is! as, if you had to conduct this *Journal* for a week, you would most infallibly discover. It is seldom, indeed, that we catch a transcendentalist committing a piece of humour; but we detect Mr Holmes in that undignified position, several times, among these various pages. He tells us of a lady of his acquaintance, who, when her husband left her for a time, did not sit down and write a mournful poem, nor, indeed, say anything about the matter one way or another, but 'quietly turned of a deep orange colour, with jaundice.' We beg our author's pardon; we have made a mistake. He goes on to state, we perceive, that this was 'a symbol of human passion, a great deal more expressive than words;' whereby we perceive that we have been gleaning out of the metaphysical portion of the volume, instead of the humorous. Certain remarks, however, which he goes on to make upon literary reputation must needs be written in fun, since surely there cannot be any real foundation for them, even in America. When an author has a number of books out, Mr Holmes avers, he will keep them, if he be sagacious, all spinning before the public eye at once, just as Signor Blitz does his dinner-plates, fetching each one up as it begins to 'wabble' by an advertisement, a puff, or a quotation. He adds that he can always tell when a new book or a new edition is about to appear from a living writer, by the multiplication in the newspapers of extracts from his old ones. 'The extracts are *ground-bait.*' Did one ever hear of such a thing in all one's literary existence? And how could such a comical idea have entered into the brain of an ingenious author?

The whole volume is pleasantly interspersed with verses, sometimes grave, and sometimes gay, and which seldom fail to please. *The Deacon's Masterpiece* is an excellent example of American humour. It is the biography of a 'one-hoss shay,' which was built in the year of the Lisbon earthquake, 1755, in such a manner that 'it *couldn'* break down;' the logic of the construction being, that since the weakest place always gives way first, the way to 'fix it' must necessarily be 'jest, to make that place as strong as the rest.' Accordingly, on its hundredth birthday, and the centenary of the Lisbon earthquake, nothing had given way yet.

> FIRST OF NOVEMBER—the earthquake-day—
> There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,
> A general flavour of mild decay,
> But nothing local, as one may say.
> There couldn't be, for the deacon's art
> Had made it so like in every part,
> That there wasn't a chance for one to start;
> For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
> And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
> And the panels just as strong as the floor,
> And the whippletree neither less nor more,
> And the back-crossbar as strong as the fore,
> And spring and axle and hub *encore.*
> And yet, *as a whole,* it is past a doubt
> In another hour it will be *worn out!*
>
> First of November, 'Fifty-five;
> This morning the parson takes a drive.
> Now, small boys, get out of the way!
> Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
> Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
> 'Huddup!' said the parson.—Off went they.
>
> The parson was working his Sunday's text—
> Had got to *fifthly,* and stopped perplexed
> At what the—Moses—was coming next.
> All at once the horse stood still,
> Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
> First a shiver, and then a thrill,
> Then something decidedly like a spill—
> And the parson was sitting upon a rock.
> At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock—
> Just the hour of the earthquake-shock!
> What do you think the parson found,
> When he got up and stared around?
> The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
> As if it had been to the mill and ground!
> You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
> How it went to pieces all at once;
> All at once, and nothing first,
> Just as bubbles do when they burst.
>
> End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
> Logic is logic. That's all I say.

The rhythm of Mr Holmes's verses was, we remember, always smooth and melodious, although such nervous imagery as

> The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mould,
> Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold,

(the pet lines of the authoress of *Our Village*), was rare among them. They are no less polished when he satirises, than when he merely described.

The witty writer of the *Quizziology of the British Drama*, in *Punch*, had never anything better (or worse) to say of the stage's staginess than the following prologue:

> 'The world's a stage,' as Shakspeare said, one day;
> The stage a world—was what he meant to say.
> The outside world's a blunder, that is clear;
> The real world that Nature meant is here.
> Here every foundling finds its lost mamma;
> Each rogue, repentant, melts his stern papa:
> Misers relent, the spendthrift's debts are paid,
> The cheats are taken in the traps they laid;
> One after one the troubles all are past
> Till the fifth act comes right side up at last,
> When the young couple, old folks, rogues and all,
> Join hands, *so* happy at the curtain's fall.
> Here suffering virtue ever finds relief,
> And black-browed ruffians always come to grief.
> When the lorn damsel, with a frantic screech,
> And cheeks as hueless as a brandy-peach,
> Cries: 'Help, kyind Heaven!' and drops upon her knees
> On the green—baize—beneath the (canvas) trees;
> See to her side avenging Valour fly—
> 'Ha! villain! draw! Now, terraitorr, yield or die!'
> When the poor hero flounders in despair,
> Some dear lost uncle turns up millionnaire—
> Clasps the young scapegrace with paternal joy,
> Sobs on his neck: '*My boy!* MY BOY!! MY BOY!!!'

Finally, let us quote a little poem sent by Mr Oliver Wendell Holmes to be sung at a certain celebration; say at the anniversary of some national poet's birthday. It was a ballad in praise of wine (or whisky), of which the poet, in his lifetime, had been an admirer; and, therefore, one would have thought, characteristic and appropriate enough. And here it is:

> Come! fill a fresh bumper, for why should we go
> While the nectar still reddens our cups as they flow?
> Pour out the rich juices still bright with the sun,
> Till o'er the brimmed crystal the rubies shall run.
>
> The purple-globed clusters their life-dews have bled;
> How sweet is the breath of the fragrance they shed!
> For summer's last roses lie hid in the wines
> That were garnered by maidens who laughed through the vines.
>
> Then a smile, and a glass, and a toast, and a cheer,
> For all the good wine, and we've some of it here!
> In cellar, in pantry, in attic, and hall,
> Long live the gay servant that laughs for us all!

The proceedings, however, were governed by a teetotal committee, whose sentiments, with respect to liquor, accorded with those of neither the dead nor living bard. The latter was therefore obliged to submit to a few slight alterations in his verses; and here is the corrected ballad:

> Come! fill a fresh bumper, for why should we go,
> While the logwood still reddens our cups as they flow?
> Pour out the decoction still bright with the sun,
> Till o'er the brimmed crystal the dye-stuff shall run.
>
> The half-ripened apples their life-dews have bled;
> How sweet is the taste of the sugar of lead!
> For summer's rank poisons lie hid in the *wines!!!*
> That were garnered by stable-boys smoking long-nines.
>
> Then a scowl, and a howl, and a scoff, and a sneer,
> For strychnine and whisky, and ratsbane and beer!
> In cellar, in pantry, in attic, in hall,
> Down, down with the tyrant that masters us all!

What a satisfaction it is to think that no such absurd incongruity could possibly happen in this country as even the proposal of a teetotal celebration of the birthday of a genial poet!

ENGLISH SHRINES AND THEIR DEVOTEES.

The custom of making pilgrimages to spots of reputed sanctity prevailed to a great extent in the latter ages of paganism, and, coupled with a reverence for relics, was transferred at a very early period to the Christian church. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem are mentioned as early as the third century; and, in the fourth, they are said by St Jerome to have been common from all parts of the Roman empire. In England, there were few shrines or relics of great repute which dated before the time of the Crusades. In some of the most celebrated, as those of the Virgin at Walsingham, and the True Blood at Hailes, the sacred *matériel* was confessedly imported by the Crusaders; while the greatest of all, the shrine of Becket at Canterbury, derived its existence from an event as late as the twelfth century.

The passion for visiting shrines and other 'holy places' appears, in the middle ages, to have prevailed pre-eminently in England. In the days of Bede, a pilgrimage to Rome was held to be a 'great virtue;' and the number of Englishmen who visited the papal court is said to have excited the sarcastic jokes of the Italians on their Catholic enthusiasm. In the number of her domestic shrines, England also exceeded all other countries. Thirty-eight existed in Norfolk alone; and to one of these, that of Our Lady of Walsingham, Erasmus says, every Englishman not regarded as irreligious, invariably paid his homage. The pilgrims who arrived at Canterbury on the sixth jubilee of the canonisation of Becket, are said to have exceeded one hundred thousand, or nearly a twentieth of the whole population of the kingdom. Even on the eve of the Reformation, when the practice of pilgrimage had much declined, it appears, from the report of one of Henry's visitors, that upwards of five hundred devotees, bringing money or cattle, had arrived the day before he wrote, at an obscure shrine in Wales.*

The practice of making foreign pilgrimages existed in England from the seventh to about the middle of the fifteenth century. Few persons of any station or wealth failed during that period to engage in these religious tours; and in later ages, they were not uncommon among persons in the middle ranks of life. The Wife of Bath, for example, though but a simple cloth-worker, had been as a pilgrim to Rome, Compostella, and Jerusalem.

The professional costume of the pilgrim consisted of a long, coarse, russet gown, with large sleeves, and sometimes patched with crosses; a leather belt worn round the shoulders or loins, and a bowl and bag suspended from it; a round hat turned up in front, and stuck either with scallop-shells or small leaden images of saints; a rosary of large beads hanging from the neck or arm; and a long staff, called the *bourdon*, hooked like a crosier, or furnished near the top with two hollow balls, which were occasionally used as a musical instrument.

Before setting out, the pilgrim received consecration, which was extended also to the several articles of his attire. Before commencing his journey, he also settled his worldly affairs, and frequently gave a part of his goods to religious uses. Such acts of generosity had probably a reference to the protection which the church bestowed on these devotees. During their absence, their property was secured from injury; nor could they be arrested or cast in any civil process. The most desperate characters respected the sanctity of their profession; and, as we learn from the *Paston Letters*, have in some instances been known, after robbing them by the way, to restore all they had taken from them. The pilgrims to foreign places were compelled by statute to embark either at Plymouth or Dover, under the penalty of five marks, to be applied in support of the canonry of Landeho in Cornwall, and the hospital of St Nicholas at Calais. From the words of the petition on which this statute was founded, as given by Lodge in his *Illustrations*—'la serche meultz purra estre fait en un port q'en plusours' (*search can be better made in one port than in many*)—we infer that the reason for this restriction arose from a desire to check the smuggling which is said to have been extensively carried on by persons in this disguise.

In the order of foreign pilgrims must be reckoned the palmers, a class of men whose real history and condition are little known, though their name is so familiar. The distinction between the pilgrim and the palmer is thus stated in a very curious volume, entitled *The Romish Horseleech:* 'The pilgrim had some home or dwelling-place; the palmer had none. The pilgrim travelled to some certain designed place; the palmer to all. The pilgrim went at his own charges; the palmer professed wilful poverty, and went upon alms. The pilgrim might give over his profession and return home; but the palmer must be consistent till he had obtained his palm by death.'

The rise of the domestic shrines of England, and the decline of foreign pilgrimage, are evidences of the milder character which asceticism had begun to wear. The spirit and manner of these pilgrimages differed in many respects from those of the former kind. From their diminished distance and danger, they had comparatively little of the same solemn preparation or devotional austerity. Few domestic pilgrims probably underwent the ceremony of consecration, or travelled in any particular costume. This is evident from Chaucer's pilgrims, who are all equipped in their gayest dresses, and exhibit no distinctive sign of their profession either in appearance or in spirit. They pursue their journey gaily on horseback, and make it an occasion of mirth and enjoyment rather than of religious mortification:

> Every man in his wise made hertly chere,
> Telling his fellow of sportis and of cheer,
> And of mirthes that fallen by the waye,
> As custom is of pilgrimes, and hath been many a daye.

These remarks, however, are chiefly true of the customary and periodical pilgrimages. In those which were undertaken spontaneously from some strong emotion, a severer character prevailed. Mr Fosbrooke contends that, in pilgrimages of this kind, it was an essential condition that the pilgrim should walk barefoot; and there are undoubtedly instances to the last of persons of the highest rank adopting this painful mode of travelling. In one of the pilgrimages of Henry VIII. to Walsingham, he is said by Spelman to have walked thither barefoot from Barsham, a distance of about three miles; and in the same way, the beautiful Henrietta Maria, queen of Charles I., was once sentenced by her confessor to make a pilgrimage from Somerset House to Tyburn, there to do homage to the saintship of some recently executed Catholics. 'No longer agon,' says a writer in Mr Ellis's first series of *Original Letters*, 'then upon St James's day last past [1626], those hypocritical dogges made the pore queen to walke afoot, some add barefoot, from her house at St James's to the gallowes at Tyborne, therby to honour the saint of the day in visiting that holy place, where so many martyrs, forsoothe, had shed their blod in defence of the Catholique cause. Had they not also made her to dable in the durt of a foule morning from Somerset House to St James's, her Luciferian confessour riding allong by her in his coach! Yea, they have made her to go barefoot, to spin, to eat her meat out of tryne (wooden) dishes, to waite at the table and serve her servants, with many other ridiculous and absurd penances.'

In all pilgrimages of real devotion, the practice of walking was common. In one of the *Paston Letters*, written in 1741, the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk are mentioned as making a pilgrimage together in this way to Walsingham; and it must have been adopted, from necessity, in the cases in which entire families made pilgrimages with all the children and servants. Some of the above instances, however, may be said equally to prove the greater severity, or at least decorum, which marked these religious excursions in the upper ranks, and which prevailed at all times to a degree that would probably not be inferred from Chaucer's picture.

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* Burnet, i. 242.

In the pilgrimages of the lower orders his descriptions seem to have been fully justified. A passage quoted by Mr Fosbrooke from one of the early state trials, gives us a picturesque idea of the gay and social spirit in which they were conducted. The dialogue occurs between a captious disciple of Wickliff in the time of Henry IV., and Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury. 'Also, sir,' says the former, 'I knowe well that when divers men and women will go after their owne wills, and finding out a pilgrimage, they will order to have with them both men and women that can sing wanton songs; and some other pilgrims will have with them bagpipers, so that every towne they come through, they make more noise than if the king came that way with all his clarions and minstrels. And if these men and women be a month in their pilgrimage, many of them shall be half a year after great janglers, tale-tellers, and liars.' To which the archbishop quaintly replies, that 'pilgrims have with them singers and also pipers, that when one of them that goeth barefoote striketh his toe upon a stone and maketh it to bleed, it is well done that he or his fellow begin then a song, or else take out of his bosome a bagpipe, to drive away with such mirth the hurte of his fellow.'

The object of a pilgrimage was sometimes of a general, and sometimes of a special kind; and the ceremonial which took place on arriving at a shrine differed accordingly. At Boxley and Hailes the pilgrim underwent a sort of ordeal which was supposed to determine his spiritual state. At the former place he lifted, or tried to lift, a small wooden image of St Rumbold, which was artfully pinned to the altar if his offering had been insufficient; and at the latter he was shewn a phial of the true blood, with a blackened side, which, when turned towards him, rendered the contents invisible. But these were particular cases; and, generally speaking, a visit to a shrine included nothing more than the ordinary gratification of curiosity or devotion. A tolerable idea of its general nature may be gained from the description given by Erasmus of his visit to Walsingham. His dialogue on this subject is perhaps too fanciful in parts to be implicitly adopted; but there is no reason to doubt the general correctness of its details, the minuteness of which gives it an additional value.

The pilgrims who arrived at Walsingham entered the sacred precinct by a low narrow wicket. It was purposely made difficult to pass as a precaution against the robberies which were frequently committed at the shrine. On the gate in which the wicket opened was nailed a copper image of a knight on horseback, whose miraculous preservation on the spot by the Virgin formed the subject of one of the numerous legendary stories with which the place abounded. To the east of the gate, and within the enclosure, stood a small chapel, where the pilgrim was allowed, 'for a consideration,' to kiss a gigantic bone, said to have been the finger-bone of St Peter. After this, he was conducted to a building, thatched with reeds and straw, enclosing two wells in high repute for indigestion and headache, and also for the rarer virtue of insuring to the votary, within certain limits, whatever he might wish for at the time of drinking their waters. The building itself was said to have been transported there through the air, many centuries before, in a deep snow; and, as a proof of it, the visitor was gravely desired to notice an old bear's skin attached to one of the beams! After this, he entered the outer chapel, an unfinished building in the time of Erasmus, who describes the high winds from the neighbouring sea as blowing through its open doors and windows. Within this stood the chapel of the Virgin, a small wooden building with doors in its opposite sides, through which the pilgrims entered and retired. The celebrated image of Our Lady stood within it, on the right of the altar. The interior was kept highly perfumed, and illuminated solely by tapers, which dimly revealed the sacred image, surrounded by the gold and jewels of the shrine. The pilgrim knelt a while on the steps of the altar, and then deposited his offering upon it and passed on. What he gave was instantly taken up by a priest, who stood in readiness to prevent the next comer from stealing it in depositing his own offering. At an altar, apparently in the outer chapel, was exhibited the celebrated relic of the Virgin's milk. It was enclosed in a crystal to prevent the contamination of lips

Whose kiss
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste,

and set in a crucifix. The pilgrims knelt on the steps of the altar to kiss it, and, after the ceremony, the priest held out a board, like that with which tolls were collected at the foot of bridges, to receive their offerings. The sacred relic itself, Erasmus says, was excessively like chalk mixed with the white of eggs, and quite solid.* The image of the Virgin and her Son, as the pilgrims made their salute, also appeared to him to give them a nod of approbation.

At Canterbury, which Erasmus also visited, there appears to have been less variety of incident. The pilgrim was there chiefly employed in doing honour to the relics of almost countless saints, and pre-eminently to those of Becket. 'On the north side of the choir,' he says, 'the guides opened several doors, and the pilgrims beheld an immense collection of bones of all kinds—skullbones, jawbones, teeth, hands, fingers, &c., which they kissed as they were severally taken out.' At his visit, an arm was presented to them to salute, with the flesh still upon it, and bloody. In doing honour to the relics of Becket, they kissed the rusty point of the sword that split his skull, and the fissure in the skull itself, exposed for that purpose in a silver case. Near his monument, their eyes were gratified with the sight of his hair-shirt, his belt, and trousers. His neckerchief, dirty with his sweat, and spotted with his blood, and even the rags on which he blew his saintly nose, were also shewn them. Such exhibitions were perfectly consistent with the genius of canonisation, and with that love of disgusting subjects which was not unfrequently mingled with ideas of sanctity.

All pilgrimages to canonised shrines were professedly devotional; but they had often a near relation to some personal want or secular interest of the devotee. This arose from that subdivision of the Romish, as of the classical, calendar which assigned a tutelary deity to almost every situation or contingency of life, and in consequence filled the country with shrines of a specific virtue. 'We set,' says Sir Thomas More in his *Dialogue on the Adoration of Images*, 'every saint in his office, and assign him a craft such as pleaseth us. St Loy we make a horse-leech; and because one smith is too few at the forge, we set St Ippolitus to help him. St Appolonia we make a tooth-drawer, and may speak to her of nothing but sore teeth. St Sythe, women set to seek their keys. St Roke we appoint to see to the great sickness, and with him we join St Sebastian.' In like manner, every trade had its patron: even the rat-catcher could hope for no success in his profession without the kindly interference of St Gertrude. From the same local and specific efficacy, some shrines that were uncanonised enjoyed a repute little inferior to those which could boast of a celestial patron. A singular shrine of this kind existed at Winfarthing in Norfolk, containing a precious relic called 'The Good Sword of Winfarthing.' It was efficient in the recovery of lost property, and of horses stolen or strayed, and in the still more important office of shortening the lives of refractory husbands. To obtain its interference in this way, the impatient helpmate was simply required to enter the church on every Sunday throughout the year, and set up a lighted candle before the relic.

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* From a scarcely legible inscription on the wall, Erasmus learned that the precious relic was purchased in the tenth century by an old woman near Constantinople, with an assurance, from which arose its fame, that all other portions of the Virgin's milk had fallen on the ground before they were collected, while this was taken directly from her breast!

The pilgrimages to sanative wells and fountains must be reckoned amongst those to specific shrines. Springs of this kind, when consecrated, were generally found in the neighbourhood of some chapel or monastery of their patron saint, within which a part of the ceremony usually took place. The counties of Norfolk and Suffolk contained sanatary wells of various efficacy, such as those at Woolpit, East Dereham, Wereham, and Bawburgh. The effect of these wells was probably not always imaginary. In many instances, a medical as well as a religious benefit might arise from the ceremony which the visitor underwent.

In some instances, the imputed efficacy of consecrated wells was of a moral kind. The wells of St John and of the Virgin at Honily, in Warwickshire, for example, were celebrated for removing the taint of unchastity.

The custom of performing pilgrimages by proxy, which very early crept into practice, was perhaps a consequence of the Catholic doctrine, that an individual might, on some occasions, depute his religious duties to others without danger to himself. Generally, however, these pilgrimages were performed only after the demise of the person to whom they referred, although a few instances occur of their taking place in his lifetime. Provisions for these post-obit pilgrimages are frequently met with in the wills of distinguished persons, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. In the earlier instances, they were commonly directed to Rome or Jerusalem; and in these cases were committed to priests, who were directed to pray or sing masses at all convenient places by the way. But in later ages, like other pilgrimages, they were more commonly made to domestic shrines, and appear to have been intrusted to simple laymen. A pious lady, whose will is printed in Blomefield's *Norfolk*, to which we have been indebted for many curious particulars connected with our subject, provides for a pilgrim to visit, after her death, no less than eight different shrines within that county. It is probable, from the low rate at which these spiritual commissions were generally paid, that the same person undertook them for several persons at once. In the will of Lady Cecily Gerbridge, in 1418, only ten marks are left for a pilgrim to visit Rome; and in another, that of Gardener, bishop of Norwich, in 1508, only twenty marks are left for the same pilgrimage, with the condition of singing at Rome for thirteen weeks. In some few cases, the executors of a will were directed to give certain sums to all pilgrims, without distinction, who were willing to undertake an assigned pilgrimage for the deceased.

The practice of making valuable presents to shrines, though not assuming the form of pilgrimages, was very nearly allied to them in spirit. These presents were made annually, or at other periodical intervals, by most persons of rank in Roman Catholic ages. It appears from the household book of the Earl of Northumberland, that he gave donations every year to several popular shrines, and kept a candle constantly burning at some of them, with a provision for a priest to attend it. Edward I. appears to have made periodical offerings to nearly one hundred shrines; and his queen is recorded to have given twelve florins of gold for herself and her son to the several shrines of Becket at Canterbury. It was common in sickness for the invalid or his friends to tempt the intercession of a saint by vowing to present quantities of corn, bread, or wax at his shrine, the precise quantity being generally determined by the weight of the patient. In one of the *Paston Letters*, Margaret Paston informs her brother that his mother had vowed an image of wax of his weight to Our Lady of Walsingham, and that she was going to the same shrine on a pilgrimage for him. But the most valuable presents of this kind were those made by bequest. Ladies at their death often left their richest dresses and most costly jewels to the shrines of their favourite saints; and it was probably in this way, as much as by pilgrimage, that their immense wealth was accumulated. A most splendid bequest of this kind occurs in the will of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, in 1435. He directs his executors to cause four images of pure gold, each containing twenty pounds, to be made in the likeness of himself in his coat of arms, and holding an anchor between his hands—one to be given to the shrine of St Alban, another to that of St Thomas of Canterbury, a third to Bridlington in Yorkshire, and a fourth to the shrine of St Winifred at Shrewsbury.

At shrines like that of Becket, it may be supposed, from their immense wealth, that a great part of the presents was preserved; but at many of the lesser ones the priests avowedly claimed the gifts as their own.

To this cause may perhaps be attributed the excessive number of rural shrines. Under strong temptations of gain, there will never be wanting persons in any profession to take advantage of ignorance and credulity; and such disinterested forbearance was least of all to be expected in the clergy of the middle ages. The history of one of the absurd relics mentioned in a previous column, the good sword of Winfarthing, is probably a fair sample of that of a majority of the shrines, if their origin could be known. This precious relic was originally the sword of a robber who took sanctuary in the churchyard, but escaped through the negligence of the watchman, leaving the sword behind him. It was laid up for many years in an old chest; but the parson and clerk at length striking on the idea of proclaiming it as a relic, drew it from its obscurity, and made a handsome revenue of their device. 'The taking up of a man's bones,' says Sir Thomas More, 'and setting them in a gay shrine, hath made many a saint.' The image of the Virgin at Worcester, when unfrocked by the reformers, was found to be the statue of an old bishop of the diocese.

Many of the shrines were as mean in external apparatus as they were absurd in purpose. The usual representation of God the Father resembled, as we learn from an old author, 'an old broken-backed man, with a white head and beard, a wrinkled forehead, large hanging lips, and toothless gums.' It is probable, however, that this description might apply chiefly to the smaller shrines. The richer ones were often furnished with great sumptuousness, and, like the magnificent edifices in which they were placed, were well calculated to inspire the awe and wonder of a rude and barbarous people. Many of them were of solid gold, many richly gilt and set with jewels. Tapers burned continually before them; banners were suspended over them; and sometimes the effigies of knights in complete armour stood around them, as if for a guard.

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'PICKETS' *VERSUS* BULLETS.

The old regulation-musket, known in the army by the affectionate *sobriquet* of 'Brown Bess,' would sometimes, though not always, carry a bullet with a certain degree of precision about a hundred yards; but beyond that very moderate distance, no one, however expert, could make sure of hitting even a barn-door; the aim of the individual who pulled the trigger, supposing that the state of his nerves permitted him to take aim at all—which a very distinguished general, not very long since deceased, declared to be not invariably the case—having very little to do with the direction taken by the projectile. On momentous occasions, when it was important that shots should not be thrown away, the old instructions were: 'Reserve your fire, my lads, till you can see the whites of the fellows' eyes; then aim low, and blaze away as fast as you can.' That is, nobody thought of doing much execution except at very close quarters; but, like Molière's physician, *nous avons changé tout cela;* and science has furnished us with a musket with which we may begin to blaze away at our adversaries almost as soon as we can see that they *are* adversaries, and with which a good shot may almost make sure of sending a 'picket' to its mark at something like a thousand yards. The modern picket, therefore—which is the American name for a Minié rifle-ball—is a very much more formidable missile than the old-fashioned bullet; but, whatever may be its advantages over its predecessor as to accuracy of flight, length of range, and penetrating power, there is one disadvantage attending the general employment of the rifled musket from which it is fired. It is not sufficient to substitute for Brown Bess a superior description of firearm; but in order to enable our soldiers to use their weapons with effect, careful training and much practice are requisite, so that the instructing of a recruit is a much more complicated affair than it used to be. We have lately had an opportunity of seeing a great many men trained to the use of the new arm; and it may interest the reader to learn something of the process by which the lad who has perhaps never fired a shot in his life, is converted into a more or less skilful rifleman. There are certain moral results, too, which may be expected to flow from the substitution of a scientifically constructed weapon for the clumsy Brown Bess, and which it is by no means uninteresting to note.

In the first place, then, it is necessary that the future marksman should be taught to judge, with a considerable degree of accuracy, the distance he is from the object he is to fire at; for, unless he can ascertain that, the new rifle will be scarcely more destructive in his hands than the old musket. The length of range is determined by the degree of elevation; and in order to get this correctly, a sight, the height of which is regulated according to a scale, is fixed in front of the lock; but it is obvious that the true distance must be known before the 'sight' can be properly adjusted, and nothing but practice can enable a man to ascertain this by the eye alone. To some it may appear difficult to teach men to judge, within a comparatively few yards, how far they are from an object placed at from one to nine hundred yards from them; and this, too, under every variety of circumstance, such as differences of level in the size and position of the intervening and surrounding objects, and, above all, in various atmospheric conditions, and amount of light; but if we reflect with what accuracy we habitually judge of such short distances or lengths, in yards, feet, and inches, as those with which we commonly have to do, we shall readily believe that, with practice, the eye may be taught to serve us as faithfully even when it is a question as to scores and hundreds of yards; and experience shews this to be the case. There are, of course, some thick-skulled, non-observing fellows who can never be made to guess their distances correctly; but most of the men soon acquire a considerable facility in so doing, and in practice, it must be remembered that it is not necessary that every man should be quick at it; for a few sharp-eyed lads will leaven a whole lump of stupidity, and enable every one to adjust the 'sight' of his piece with sufficient accuracy.

Instruction in judging distances is managed in this way: The class is drawn up on some open space of ground, and two or more of their number are sent on with a red flag, the men being made to face in the contrary direction to that in which the flag is being carried, so that they shall not be able to count steps, or in any other irregular manner assist themselves in forming a judgment of the distance traversed, which must be decided by the eye alone. As soon as the bearers of the red flag stop, the class faces about, and the sergeant, standing six or seven paces in front of his men, so as to be out of hearing, calls out each man separately, and asks him how far he thinks he is from it. His answer is put against his name in a book ruled for the purpose, and when all have guessed, the true distance is ascertained by measurement—every man getting so many marks or points set down to him, according to the accuracy of his answer—that is, provided he guesses within a certain number of yards of the truth; for unless he does so, he gets no point at all. If the men are out judging distances for the first time, the differences of opinion will be very wide, private Murphy perhaps thinking that he is full five hundred yards from the object that private Milligan, with great pretension to exactness, declares to be no more than three hundred and twenty-five yards distant; but after a few mornings' practice, Brown and Jones, Murphy and Milligan, come to see things much more in the same light, and their differences are reduced to a small number of yards. In short, most men soon manage to get the number of points they should obtain before being passed on to a more advanced class of students in the art of shooting with the Enfield rifle.

But besides being taught to judge distances, the men have another course of instruction to undergo, before they are put into the first class for ball-practice at the target. They must be taught the principles on which accuracy of aim depends with the peculiar weapon they are to use. For this purpose, stands—something like the stands used to support an engineer's level or the camera of the photographer—are set up at different distances from the target; and the learner, resting his musket on one of these, adjusts the aim to the best of his judgment. It is so contrived that the piece will remain on the stand as pointed, so that the instructor can shew the pupil any error that he may have made, and can make him change the aim either horizontally or vertically as the case requires. When he has been made to level his musket with tolerable accuracy in this way, the pupil is ready to commence firing at the target in the first class; that is, among those who are to fire at a distance of from 100 up to 300 yards. The Enfield rifle being sighted to 900 yards, three classes have been established for practice—namely, of those in the first class, who fire from 100 to 300 yards; of those in the second class, firing from 300 up to 600 yards; and of those in the third class, who fire from 600 to 900 yards; every man being obliged to obtain so many points in the first class before he can pass into the second, and in the second before he can pass into the third. As soon as he has obtained the required number of points in the last class, his course of instruction is complete. All that teaching can do for him has been done, and, unless he be one of those unfortunate mortals, born fumblers, and totally without manual dexterity, he is probably an average marksman. Only a decided genius for the thing will make him a really good shot.

Ball-practice is thus regulated. The class is drawn up in line, a sergeant standing by with book and pencil, as when the men are being made to judge distances. At the word, each man steps forward in succession, delivers his fire, and, accordingly as he has made a good, bad, or middling shot, gets good or bad marks set against his name in the register of the firing. If he misses the target altogether, no signal is made by the marker at the butt, and he gets a 'miss' put against his name; but if he makes a hit, the marker signals by different flags whether the hit is an 'outer'—that is, outside the outer ring—a 'centre'—or within the outer ring—or a bull's-eye. An outer counts one point; a centre, two; and a bull's-eye, three. It will be proper to observe that the width of the target employed varies in proportion to the distance from which the practice is carried on. No change, however, is made in the height of the target, that remaining always about the height of a man. At first, one target, two feet wide by six high—about the size of one man—is used, and several of these targets are placed side by side as the distance becomes greater. At nine hundred yards, eight targets are employed, representing a front of about eight men, and the bull's-eye is made four feet in diameter. Nor at such a distance as half a mile is a bull's-eye of that diameter by any means easy to hit; for it is obvious that the smallest deviation from the correct line of flight becomes of immense importance when prolonged through such a distance as that. Moreover, the effect of the wind on the flight of the ball, at these long ranges, is found to be very great. A sergeant—who, as we had many opportunities of observing, is a capital shot—assured us, that when firing at the 900 yards' range during a high wind, he found his first ball driven nearly fourteen feet out of the correct course. In his subsequent shots, he allowed that much in his aim, and then succeeded in hitting the bull's-eye several times running.

For the first few hundred yards, the Enfield rifle is fired standing, like the old musket; but at greater distances, it is better to kneel if the object fired at is placed on the same level, or the great elevation given to the piece would require it to be held too low on the shoulder for steadiness. In order to shoot well kneeling, the shooter should plant himself firmly on the right heel, rest his left elbow on his left knee, and so get a capital rest for his piece in the left hand. Another mode of getting a steady aim, particularly when there is much wind—but one which can of course only be adopted under peculiar circumstances, is to lie at full length on the back, with one's 'feet to the foe' or target. The muzzle of the rifle rests on the toes of the right foot, the butt is pressed to the right thigh by the left hand, which is brought across the stomach, and the trigger is pulled as usual by the right hand, the head being raised three or four inches from the ground in order to take aim. Excellent shots are generally made in this curious position, and it may be very advantageously adopted by the sharpshooter who wishes to be particularly careful of his own person, as well as to make good shots. A sod, a few inches thick, is a complete rampart to a man lying on his back, and he could not well be hit by anything but a chance shell, for he would not expose his head and shoulders even when in the act of firing, as he must do in a greater or less degree if he lay on his stomach.

In ordinary light-infantry skirmishing, the men are extended to the right and left in pairs at about a dozen paces apart. One man fires his piece, and stepping a pace or two aside, reloads, while his companion advances before him, and fires in his turn, and so on—each man alternately advancing to fire and reloading, so long as the forward movement lasts, the 'retiring' being conducted on precisely the same principles. Now, even this drill is carried on with ball-cartridge, so that some idea may be formed of the effect likely to be produced by well-trained men in this kind of fighting, when armed with our improved weapons. Ten or a dozen single targets, of the usual size—two feet wide by six high—are placed in a line, with the proper intervals between them, thus representing a line of the enemy's skirmishers; and a party of men, extended in pairs as above described, fire at them with ball-cartridge, advancing and retiring as if in the presence of an enemy. The men we saw at this light-infantry drill were a party of about twenty of the Royal Engineers, armed with the Lancaster rifle, which is considered to be a better weapon even than the Enfield; but the number of misses compared with the hits, even under these favourable circumstances, plainly shewed how much the difficulty of taking a correct aim is increased by this constant shifting of one's ground. Clearly, in the good old days of Brown Bess, skirmishing in this fashion could not have been very destructive to life. At 400 yards, the hits were very few; but as the line of skirmishers advanced, they of course became more frequent, until, at 100 or 150 yards, there were more hits than misses. In determining the average number of shots which may be expected to take effect, however, we must take into consideration a circumstance which would assuredly exercise a strong perturbing influence. If the targets were armed with Enfield or Lancaster rifles, and were returning picket for picket, the aim would certainly not be so accurate. Soldiers soon become something given to fatalism; and where bullets are singing and whizzing about their ears, they are enabled to take things all the more coolly if they have some faith in the doctrine that 'every bullet has its billet.' Without impugning any one's courage, then, we may be permitted to believe that many more bullets are billeted for the bull's-eye, whatever that may chance to be, when they are all flying in one direction. But besides this element of disturbance, there is another difficulty which must be taken into account in the calculation. When one party is skirmishing, the other party is skirmishing too; so that the difficulty of making a good shot is increased by the motion of the object fired at; and this element must be allowed for before we can calculate, from the results of target-practice, the probable percentage of hits. Perhaps the most striking result of the Enfield rifle-firing—at least to us—was the effect of a volley, or rather of a series of volleys, fired by twenty men at ten targets, placed close together at 300 yards' distance. The balls pattered like hail upon the iron targets; and it is clear that many a gallant fellow in future will 'lose the number of his mess' before he is near enough to the foe to see the white of his eyes.

But the change from the hap-hazard, load-and-fire-as-fast-as-you-can system of shooting with Brown Bess, to the skilful handling of the rifled musket, can hardly fail to have a very desirable influence on the *morale* of the soldier. The elaborate training the men now undergo, and the emulation excited among them, must have a considerable effect on their character and habits; and therefore, even in an educational point of view, we gain largely by the improvement in our weapons of war. No one can doubt that this will be the case who passes a few hours watching a class at target-practice, and has observed how lively an interest the men take in the work, particularly when compared with the bored look of the same men engaged in field-drill. For the first time since the days when powder and ball superseded the national bow and arrow, the English soldier has some employment connected with his profession in which he can take an interest, irrespective of mere drill; in which all but hopeless noodles—every day less commonly found among army recruits as elsewhere—are soon perfect; and which, if persisted in too unremittingly, more than any one thing disgusts the soldier with his calling. If no other advantage resulted from the relegation of Brown Bess to the United Service Museum, and other dépôts of military curiosities, we should be amply compensated for the increased cost of the superior description of musket, and the extra expense of the ammunition required for practice. Any stinginess, indeed, in this latter item—ammunition—will necessarily interfere with the progress made by the men as marksmen, and will very materially diminish the other advantages to be derived from the reformation in musketry. Enthusiasm must not be cramped by the denial of a cartridge.

It is well known that in those regiments in which such sports as cricket and foot-ball are encouraged, the men are both more healthy and better conducted than in those in which the men are accustomed to seek recreation in the public-house alone. Target-practice, therefore, may be easily made a pastime as well as a duty; and the men will take to it as willingly as Swiss peasants to practice at the village butt, or as idle fellows to sparrow and pigeon shooting. We must expect to find black sheep in every flock, and therefore it is not surprising that some men grumble at the extra trouble and time demanded by so much ball-practice; but, generally speaking, they appear to take an interest in what they are about, which is quite refreshing to behold; and do their best, not only to win the prizes offered to the best shots, but to surpass their comrades—the 'chaffing' which constantly goes on at the expense of the bad shots, being in itself sufficient proof of the interest excited. The rewards for good shooting are considerable, reference being had to the moderate scale of a soldier's pay. A penny, twopence, threepence, or fourpence per day extra pay, may be obtained by the most expert marksmen in the company or regiment; and a more chivalrous feeling is appealed to by the giving of a decoration to the best shot, in the shape of a pair of crossed muskets worked in gold embroidery on the sleeve and cap of the prizemen. This extra pay, and this honourable mark—as we understand—the marksman retains for a certain period, and then must win them anew, or, like the holder of Dockett's badge amongst the watermen, yield them up to the better shot.

The writer, a short time since, was witness of a trial of skill between two little buglers, which will serve to shew the excellent moral effect which the new system of teaching men to use their arms skilfully will have on them. Two parties had finished the regulation allowance of ammunition for the day, and there being four spare cartridges left, the buglers—evidently what the French call *enfants de troupe*, children of the regiment—asked if they might ''av a shot.' Neither of the little fellows had ever fired a musket loaded with ball-cartridge before, and much delighted they were at the opportunity of doing so; but the interest excited was not confined to them; the soldiers and the civilian on-lookers being equally anxious to see which would prove himself the better man, or, rather, boy. The distance happened to be two hundred yards; and number one, the biggest boy, fired his first shot, and got an 'outer,' counting one point. This was good work; and the party to which number two belonged thought themselves beaten; but their champion, with his first shot, got a 'centre,' counting two points. Then number one fired again, getting another 'outer,' or one point; and unless number two made at least a hit, it was a dead heat. But number two, taking a very deliberate aim with the musket he had barely strength enough to hold out, again got a 'centre,' or two points, thus beating his opponent by two to one, whereupon his party cheered; and he, taking what is known amongst the genus *gamin* as 'a sight' at his adversary, danced round him like a little cannibal. Here, then, we have proof of the existence of a much healthier state of feeling than that which we find usually prevalent among soldiers who are undergoing the training incident to their calling. In truth, facing right, left, and about; marching and counter-marching, in slow time or quick, like an automaton, at the will of another, must inevitably be dreary work. But the soldier has now an occupation in which he ceases to be a mere machine, and which brings his faculties into play as well as his muscles.

When guard-duty is light, as in many places it must be, a great deal of time hangs heavily on the soldier's hands—always supposing that he is not over-drilled—and his mind is but too often a mere blank. He therefore naturally seeks at the public-house or beer-shop for the amusement and excitement which is a necessity, under one form or another, for every human being; and which, if not to be obtained innocently, will assuredly be obtained at the expense of both health and morals. Health suffers too, as it has of late been conclusively shewn, by the listlessness and weariness inseparable from the monotonous existence of the soldier; and it is of the highest importance, therefore, to find occupation for his mind, even in a purely sanitary point of view. Of course, it would be utterly absurd to expect that these serious evils—serious, if only on the low ground that the efficiency of the army is thereby diminished, and its cost increased—will be eradicated by anything which the best intentioned rulers can adopt; but giving the men an *interesting* occupation will certainly aid in allaying them. It will help greatly the good effects produced by the improved barrack accommodation, the better regulation of canteens, and the establishment of regimental schools and libraries.

We have already remarked, that the pecuniary rewards offered by the government as an inducement to the men to make themselves skilful marksmen, are considerable, having regard to the scale of the soldier's pay; but if we may form an opinion from our limited experience, the spirit of rivalry will be no less efficacious than the hope of winning the pecuniary rewards, in keeping alive amongst the men that spirit of *good-will*, without which the most elaborate and patient training must remain comparatively valueless. After all, the age we live in is by no means so prosaic as its detractors would have us believe; numbers there are still

Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth;

and admittance into the purely chivalric order of the Victoria Cross is as eagerly sought for by all ranks of fighting-men as it could have been in the days of Cœur-de-Lion himself. To become one of the best shots in the British army is no mean object of ambition for the young soldier to propose to himself; and, to borrow a metaphor from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the badge which proclaims him to be so, may be justly termed 'the Blue Ribbon' of the ranks.

THE UNHIRED SERVANT.

My father was a linen-merchant of the city of London, and one of the thousands whom the introduction of the power-loom, and the consequent influx of cotton goods, brought to inevitable failure. He was an old man at the time; and though I do not think it broke his heart, he lived only to see his affairs wound up, paid all his creditors to the last shilling, and died; leaving my mother and me with no resource but to sell our furniture, remove from our convenient old house in Cheapside, where he had carried on business, and we had lived as the best merchants' families did in those days, to find a humbler habitation, and work for our living. We had no relations who could help us; my mother had never been strong, and was verging on fifty, but she was a woman of sense and spirit, who would not sit down and lament over her misfortunes, without trying what could be done. I was the only child, then in my nineteenth year, and pretty well qualified to act as a governess; but neither my mother nor I could make up our minds to part; and it seemed like a god-send when Mr Buckells, the auctioneer who sold our furniture, called to say, that Lord Yarmouth was advertising for a respectable person to take charge of a country-seat he had in the county Norfolk. My mother immediately offered her services, and was accepted. His lordship's man of business arranged everything at his office in Chancery Lane. She was to have fifty pounds a year, besides board and residence for herself and me at Fenham Hall, as they called the country-seat. The lawyer said it was rather lonely, and Mrs Western would be the better for her daughter's company; but one clause in the agreement rather surprised us—namely, that the situation was not to be given up sooner than two years.

'It is strange,' said my mother; 'but we want a home, and cannot afford to be particular.' So she signed the agreement, bought some necessaries, and we set out for Lord Yarmouth's seat in Norfolk.

It was towards the end of September; the weather was unusually cold and cloudy for the season, and there seemed every probability of an early winter as we journeyed northward by stage-coach and post-chaise—for railways were yet undreamed of. A greater change from Cheapside could not be well imagined than our new residence. It was a large manor-house, and looked as if it had been built in pieces. There was every variety of architecture, from the early English to the latest Stuart. The oldest part, or northern wing, had been a priory before the Reformation, and had still a monastic look about it; but the whole formed a strong, solid, and lordly mansion, situated on one of those long stretches of level land so frequent in the east of Norfolk; twelve miles from Norwich, three from the village of Fenham, and surrounded by an extensive park with giant trees, thick underwood, and game enough to give the whole House of Commons a week's shooting. The gardens and shrubberies, in design and extent, were worthy of the mansion; they had been laid out in the old-English style, and were tolerably well kept, though somewhat overgrown, as if the care and taste of an owner had been long wanting. There was a lawn in front so large that it looked like a broad strip of meadow-land, bounded by a lake which went deep into the wood, and was frequented by innumerable water-fowl. A carriage-road, shaded by great oaks, skirted the lake, and led to the grand entrance; but the grass was growing thickly about the steps, and the hall-door and bay-windows looked long shut up. There was a noble gallery of pictures, and suites of splendid rooms within, all richly furnished, but in an antiquated fashion. Little of the furniture was newer than Queen Anne's time, and most of it belonged to a much earlier period. I remember chambers hung with real arras, Persian carpets, and cabinets which the Dutch traders brought from Japan in the middle of the seventeenth century, with warrants for the same in Dutch and Latin duly deposited in their drawers. So much old china never came within my vision, nor do I recollect to have seen such fine specimens of those old-world instruments, the dulcimer and harpsichord. The library was filled with the fathers, the schoolmen, and works of Catholic theology. The gallery had family portraits in every variety of costume, from knights in plate-armour to ladies in sacks and high-heeled shoes; but the greater number of them were not of the Yarmouth line—they were all Hartwells—and more melancholy, disappointed faces I never saw; but the strangest thing in that gallery was a magnificently gilt frame hanging opposite the central door with no picture in it. All the house was shut, but not locked up. My mother and I had free access to all its rooms and passages—and they were many—of all shapes and sizes, with no lack of private stairs, side-doors, and very strong closets. Moreover, there was nobody but ourselves on the premises; and the only person in charge when we arrived was Ralph Fairbrother—a man who acted in the double capacity of steward and gardener.

Ralph's hair was perfectly gray, but he was still strong and active—a middle-sized man, with a thin muscular frame, a remarkably sober look, and a reserved, taciturn disposition. His dwelling was a large and very comfortable cottage, standing in a shady hollow where the park and gardens met, and managed by his only daughter, Nelly; a young woman who was deaf and dumb, but industrious, tidy, and apparently intelligent.

His wife looked twenty years older than himself, and lived, whether from choice or necessity, in her bed, I could never be sure, for the good woman shewed no signs of disease, and could get up with surprising activity when it suited her pleasure. Ralph was supreme over all the outdoor concerns of the hall. He employed and dismissed labourers by his own authority; and judging from their style of living, which was by no means economical, his services were liberally rewarded. But Mrs Fairbrother was supreme over him; and it was generally believed that whatever he said or did was under her special direction. She was a tall, wrinkled, sour-looking dame, possessed of such an idea of her own consequence, that she despised her husband, her daughter, in short, the whole Fairbrother race; and had an extraordinary dislike to the proprietors of the hall, past and present, speaking of them all in a contemptuously familiar fashion, so different from the usual tone of family dependents, that my mother doubted her sanity; particularly on one occasion, when she gave us to understand that she ought to have been Lady Yarmouth. Mrs Fairbrother was sane enough, however, and willing enough also to tell the complete history of Fenham Hall, and how it came into the Yarmouth family—which, by the way, was a curious illustration of what men will do for the lands and rentals they must leave so soon.

The original owners were the before-mentioned Hartwells, a line of squires who traced their pedigree far above the Norman Conquest, to one of the roving chiefs of Denmark, said to have won lands from the Norfolk Saxons, turned Christian, and built a priory some time in the ninth century. That priory, with all its lands, his descendants got back at the Reformation, of which they were zealous supporters, made it their house, and went on enlarging hall and estate, getting rich by marriages, and keeping clear of public difficulties, till about the year 1745, when the young squire, Richard, being the last of the male line, not only turned Catholic, but got so deeply involved with the Pretender, that he was obliged to take refuge on the continent. The sentence of attainder for high treason was passed against him and his posterity; and the Yarmouth family having some influence with the government, came into possession as next of kin. They were distant relations of the Hartwells, and greatly impoverished at the time. The then Lord Yarmouth and Squire Richard had been college-companions at Oxford. The former was far-sighted, keen, and cunning; the latter was weak, vain, and credulous; and the story went that young Hartwell's conversion in religion and politics had been more than abetted by his crafty companion, who thus obtained his hall and lands. The Yarmouths had kept them for almost half a century. The wily lord had been duly succeeded by his son and grandson. Squire Richard's claims had been also transmitted, by his marriage with a French lady, distantly related to the House of Turenne. He left a daughter, who, in her turn, married a Scotch gentleman, one of the Frasers, with whom she returned to Britain, where a daughter was born to them. Mrs Fraser was a woman of uncommon spirit, as became her maternal descent. With the help of certain papers left by her father, and the aid of her husband's relations, she commenced a suit to reverse the attainder and recover the estate for her child. Parliament was petitioned, the ministers were dealt with, the law-lords were engaged, and there was every probability of success, when the young Lord Yarmouth, who had just reached his majority, and was said to bear a strong resemblance to his grandfather, proposed to settle the business by marrying the heiress of the Hartwells, and thus uniting for ever the rival claims. Their wedding was celebrated with great splendour and rejoicing. Miss Fraser was just seventeen, beautiful, and accomplished; but two years after her marriage, she eloped with an obscure adventurer, who called himself Captain Fitzwilliam; and all that was ever heard of her afterwards, was, that she had died in great poverty in the old city of Padua, where the captain left her. Lord Yarmouth's marriage was of course dissolved by act of parliament, after bringing an action, and being duly awarded damages. He formed a more advantageous alliance with a ducal house, and had a son and heir to succeed him; but his second lady and he had separated by mutual consent, his son was borrowing money from Jews on post-obits, and none of the family had slept two nights at Fenham Hall for twenty years.

Nothing could induce Mrs Fairbrother to attempt any explanation of the latter fact, beyond a decided shake of her head. At that point she always returned to the Hartwell line, with whose sins and sorrows the gardener's lady seemed particularly well acquainted. There was a younger brother who had pushed his elder into the lake as they played beside it, and ran home to tell that he was heir. There was a squire who had killed his Jew creditor, buried him in the park, and never had rest with his hounds tearing up the grave. There was a lady who had given her squire cause of jealousy with a handsome cousin; the pair were believed to have eloped from a Shrovetide merry-making; the squire went abroad, leaving his heir and lands to the care of a faithful steward, and died fighting in the Low Countries; but years after, two skeletons were found locked up in a deep and long-disused wine-cellar. Moreover, a strain of wild and violent insanity had come down their generations, whether from the roving Dane or with the Fenham priory and lands, Mrs Fairbrother could not certify; but there was a strong room in the northern wing of the hall with grated windows and an iron-bound door, where she insisted that three-and-twenty heirs, heiresses, and owners of the Hartwell domains, closed their lives under the care of keepers.

The Fenham villagers supplemented this chronicle with Mrs Fairbrother's own antecedents. Curious enough, they all entertained the very same dislike to her which she exhibited for the owners of the hall. Their invariable account was, that the gardener's wife knew all about poor Lady Yarmouth, as they called the unlucky first countess; for she was her maid at the time, and had been well paid by my lord, or somebody; Ralph Fairbrother got three hundred pounds and that fine place by marrying her, though he had been wild in his youth, run away to sea, and come back as poor as a church-mouse. Notwithstanding these reminiscences of his early days and doings, Ralph's sway over them was almost boundless. They were altogether a set of country labourers—the only trades-people being the landlord of the ale-house, who was also chandler and draper to the entire village; and an old tailor, and his wife, who did all the needle-work. I cannot say whether or not the schoolmaster's travels have now extended to Fenham; but at the time of my story, a more uncultivated, uncivil, and ill-mannered set of cottagers were not to be found in the eastern counties. Neither day nor Sunday school had ever been within their bounds, to my knowledge. Nobody but the before-mentioned landlord could either write or read, and *his* skill in those useful arts was rather limited. The parish church was six miles distant. Its incumbent and his curate agreed that they could do no good in Fenham, and there was probably some truth in that opinion. Besides ignorance and more than common stupidity, the inhabitants were one and all animated with a spirit of blunt and vulgar independence, which made all dealings with them disagreeable, and all attempts at improvement fruitless. Every family had a cottage and a field or so, on which they existed in a savage, slovenly manner—man and woman half idle, when they were not employed about the hall; and, as Ralph could get no labourers but themselves, he and they carried on a kind of intermitting warfare, always grumbling at each other, and often breaking out into open hostility.

My mother and I had a sad time of it, endeavouring to get a maid-of-all-work among them. Whatever servants had been at the hall, they were all discharged and gone before our arrival. The apartments assigned us were situated in the northern wing, which, under the Yarmouth domination, had been mostly appropriated to domestic purposes. They consisted of six neat though queerly shaped rooms, opening on a short corridor, which had a side-entrance from what was called the evergreen shrubbery, a grove of box, laurel, and holly, growing up almost to the windows. My mother's parlour, with my bedroom and hers opening from it, was on one side; on the other, our kitchen, with rooms for stores and a servant—the whole forming a comfortable, convenient little residence in a corner of that great house, which lay round us all shut up and silent, with its vast rooms and rich old-fashioned furniture. Our home had been fitted up expressly for a resident housekeeper some fifteen years before. Several staid and discreet ladies had come from Suffolk, Lincolnshire, and all the northern counties to inhabit it; but none of them had stayed for a second winter, and the honest people of Fenham assured us that neither should we. 'For them mad Hartwells was always a coming back.'

The tailor's wife, who was the most civilised of the community, and had sewed for the hall forty years at least, declared it to be her private opinion that those unearthly visitors had considerably increased since the poor lady's business, which was not to be wondered at, as she was one of the old stock—the rightful heiress, if all tales were true; and people did say my lord had not been in the dark about her going off with that captain; but he and Mrs Fairbrother knew best. They had taken her picture out of the frame in the gallery, to keep the new servants from knowing her, in case she was ever seen; and my lord being a saving man, meant to put his second lady into it; but it was of no use, for the family could not stay.

These were encouraging details for two ladies, fresh from London city, to hear regarding the old country-house in which they were bound to live at least two years. My mother had a deal of strong sense, however, and I think she taught me some of it. We had in common a good life, a good conscience, and a tolerable education. There are no better ramparts against superstitious fears, and they stood us in good stead, notwithstanding the reputation of the place, the strange echoes which the large empty house gave back to every sound, the wonderful howling of the wind in its turret chimneys, and the shadows cast by its old trees. We never got thoroughly frightened, nor met with anything out of the common course, except the transaction I am about to relate.

When Lord Yarmouth's lawyer admitted that the hall was solitary, he certainly did not overstep the truth. There was not a house within sight of it but the gardener's cottage, which was a good quarter of a mile off; yet neither theft nor robbery had been attempted; partly, because it was generally known that there was nothing but old furniture in the mansion—his lordship having removed his plate and all portable goods of value; and partly owing to the popular belief in the returning Hartwells. That article of faith stood sadly in our way with the before-mentioned maid. No woman of any age would consent to sleep at the hall. We were obliged to dispense with their services early in the evening, that they might get home before it grew dark, and could not expect them earlier than about twelve next day. I employ the plural number, because, in our first season, we had on an average a new servant every fortnight. Some were so desperately dirty that they could not be retained on any terms; others broke everything that came in their way. One almost set the place on fire; a second accommodated herself with my mother's tabinet gown, and went to church in it on a wet Sunday; a third dropped our entire stock of china on the stone-floor of the kitchen, and fled home, declaring she had seen three of the Hartwells looking in at the window. After that tale was made public, we could get no servant at all. The want would not have been great had ourselves only been concerned; I could have done all our household work. Ralph Fairbrother supplied us with all manner of provisions, according to contract; but the hall and its furniture were to be kept in order, and that was a task beyond our united strength.

In this strait, my mother thought of applying to an acquaintance of ours in Norwich, one of the few with whom we corresponded in spite of altered fortunes. She was a merchant's wife, a notable housekeeper, and a most worthy woman. Her reply was decidedly satisfactory. She knew a housemaid, steady, honest, industrious, and not afraid of a solitary place. If my mother and I would only come to Norwich, spend a day with her, and see the girl, she might go back with us to the hall, in case we thought her suitable. Mrs Turner's invitation was kind, and the chance of seeing civilised life, though but for a day, was too good to be missed. We went to the old capital of Norfolkshire in a spring-cart, the only vehicle obtainable. My mother had a great chat about old times; I saw the newest fashions; the maid was seen and arranged with, but there were unexpected difficulties in the way of her immediate coming. The girl looked strong, active, and not too young; she had a good-humoured face, professed no fear of ghosts, and had a sort of acquaintance with Fenham Hall; her grandmother, mother, and two aunts, having been housemaids there in regular succession. The no-popery cry was then loud, in consequence of the Catholic Emancipation Bill; but my mother had no dread of the Jesuits, and shewed no unwillingness to engage Sally Steen, though she was a sound believer in the old faith, and retired, as it were, to service in the convent of the Sisters of Mercy, whenever she was out of place. The lady-superior was somehow related to Sally, on the mother's side, where, it seems, there was high and ancient blood to boast; but though the Catholicism and the convent had no terrors for us, we were disappointed in our hope of bringing home a useful servant. Sally's brother was to be married that day-week; she had promised to be at the wedding; besides, her things were to be put in order. In short, Sally could not come for at least eight days. Still, there was the prospect of a maid at last. Mrs Turner gave her the highest character—by the way, she had once served our friend for six months—and we went home, after settling with Sally to come by the Fenham carrier's wagon, and enter on her duties at the hall on Monday week.

The evening in which she was expected, found us talking and knitting by the fire. The night had fallen, for it was about the middle of December; but the weather had been clear and frosty for some days, and we could see the moonlight silvering our windows, over which the curtains had not been drawn, as my mother said the blaze would cheer Sally's heart coming up the lonely park, and guide her to our corner of the mansion. We were comforting ourselves with the rubbing-up the fire-irons, stoves, and large mahogany tables should get from her vigorous arms, as also on the peace and pleasure we should have with a good-humoured, trustworthy servant for the rest of that winter. Our tea-table was spread, and our tea-kettle singing to welcome Sally when she came in cold and tired from her journey in the wagon. There it was at last; we heard the heavy wheels roll slowly up the carriage-road; the carrier knew how to open the park-gate, luckily, for no keeper had lived at the lodge for years. I went out with a lantern, and there they were—trusty Thomson, the carrier, with all manner of parcels for us and the Fairbrothers; Sally, with her gray cloak and hood drawn over her bonnet, her large deal-box, and a bundle under her arm. Thomson was in a hurry with goods for the village innkeeper; the box, &c., had to be got in quickly. Sally was some time getting herself in order to pay her respects to my mother; but at length, in she came. There were two candles and a bright fire, and all their light was requisite to make us credit our own eyes. Instead of the ruddy, robust, good-natured looking young woman under thirty, with whom we had talked at Norwich, there walked into the parlour, very deliberately, a woman whose age I could not tell, but she was not young, tall, large-boned, and thin to the point of reminding one of a skeleton. She had on a coarse gray gown, of plain stuff, a muslin cap plaited closely round her face, which might have been handsome once, for the features were finely cut and regular, but it was long and thin beyond expression; there was no colour about it, but a streak or two of intensely black hair, straggling on the forehead, which, by the way, was broad and low, and a fixed corpse-like expression, such as I remembered to have seen in the face of one of the exiled monks of La Trappe at Spitalfields.

Her tone of voice was at once shrill and hollow, and she did not waste her time with many words; it was merely: 'Good-evening,' and she was sorry to be so late, but the wagon had been long on the road. Neither of us could speak for some minutes, and I saw there was terror as well as surprise in my mother's face; but she recovered her composure, told Sally she was in very good time, asked her some questions about her brother's wedding, and our friend Mrs Turner, which the woman answered quite satisfactorily, and sent her to have her tea comfortably by the kitchen-fire.

'Is that the woman we engaged, Sophy?' she said, as soon as the door was shut.

'I don't think it is, mother.'

'Neither do I; but what brings her here? and how can she answer so readily? Could seeing her by night and day make such a difference?'

We tried to persuade ourselves of that; but both went to bed with a queer uncomfortable feeling; and my mother looked as if her dreams had been troubled next morning. Moreover, the daylight did not make Sally a whit more like the girl we engaged in Norwich. Her face kept the same stony look we had observed overnight. She went about her work willingly, and like one used to it, but without word, or smile, or sign of cheerful activity. My mother's questions, remarks, and observations elicited no evidence against her identity; but seeing is believing—she was not the woman we had seen at Mrs Turner's. The hall had always been a dreary residence, and this strange servant did not add to its cheerfulness. Why she had come, troubled us for many a day, but we could make nothing of it; besides, she did her work well, required no watching, seemed to have no dread of the Hartwells on her mind, did not complain of loneliness, did everything she was told, and was on the whole a valuable, though not a lively servant. My mother's letter on the altered appearance of our maid seemed to amuse Mrs Turner. She wrote by return of post, which in Fenham was a weekly occurrence, to say that Sally had been at her house only two hours before she set out with the wagoner, looking just as usual; and for her own part, she could not help thinking that fancy was playing a trick in that old house of ours. Mrs Turner was above deceit of any kind. There was no probable motive for substitution. The strange-looking woman served us faithfully; so we made up our minds that it must be the veritable Sally Steen, who had come to us from Norwich, and that our eyes and memories had somehow deceived us. One thing was certain—Sally had profited by her residence in the convent. Early and late, she was repeating to herself aves, prayers, and penitential psalms. I caught sight of an iron cross and rosary hung round her neck, and carefully covered by the gray gown, and her devotions were generally prolonged far into the night. My mother had a sincere respect for the faiths and forms in which other souls found comfort. Sally's abundant prayers were no stumbling-block to us, though mostly addressed to the Virgin and St Mary Magdalene. The household went on well and quietly for some weeks; we had got fairly into the belief that all was right, and were preparing for our lonely Christmas, when a new element was added to the mysteries of Fenham Hall.

I happened to be restless and wakeful one night. It was still frosty weather, with that deep silence in the wintry air which makes sounds distinct, however faint or far off. Everybody had been in bed for hours; I had heard the parlour clock strike two, when somewhere in the large silent house there began a noise as if some one were delving or digging with all their might at very hard ground. I listened as long as my breath would hold; it was not fancy; the digging went on regularly; I could catch the sound of spade or pick coming in contact with stones, and felt sure it was within the hall. I had some courage, though I was not then twenty; my mother had taught me that there was no honour in being easily frightened. My candle was lighted as quietly as possible. Everything was just as we had left it; the kitchen was dark; so was Sally's room, and its door tightly closed; but the sound of the digging went on, till our poor cat, seeing me invade her nightly solitude, jumped up with a loud mew. Then it suddenly ceased; I listened for some time, walked about my room, at length extinguished the candle, and got into bed, but I heard no more of it for that night.

Two or three mornings after, my mother came to breakfast, looking as if she had not slept well. I had not mentioned the digging to her, meaning to watch and see if fancy had been playing me a trick; but as I poured out the tea, she said, looking firmly at me: 'Sophy, did you hear any noise in the house last night?'

Mutual questions and explanations followed, of course. The very same sound which so astonished me had been heard by my mother night after night all the previous week; she, too, had walked about, candle in hand, but could see nothing, and the noise had always ceased when she made any audible movement.

'Shall we speak to Sally?' said I. 'Or do you think it would frighten her?'

'No,' said my mother. 'I think she has something to do with it. Last Wednesday night, I tried her door; it was fast locked, and there was no breathing of any sleeper inside. Our best plan is to watch and say nothing. I have gone over all the rooms, and even the wine-cellars; I have been in Sally's room too, and in the strong room; there is nothing moved, nothing out of place; but, Sophy, I am sure the noise was in that direction.'

The strong room of Mrs Fairbrother's chronicle was situated immediately behind our kitchen, and could be reached by a private stair leading up from a dark closet at the inner end of the corridor. It was said to have been constructed out of the priory chapel; but except its vaulted roof and the traces of larger windows in its thick walls, there was no appearance of those days about it. The grated windows kept their place, and the iron-barred door; but under the Yarmouth administration it had become a receptacle for the better sorts of lumber—remnants of old armour, dilapidated hunting-gear, pictures damaged by the cleaners, and great chests of family papers. It was one of my amusements in that solitary winter to turn over its curious contents, and wonder what had become of the secret chapel which, according to a tradition preserved by the old people of Fenham, Squire Richard had made for himself somewhere in the hall, and ornamented in a most costly manner when he turned Catholic. There were no relics of the kind in the strong room; but I was poking behind one of the chests a day or two after our talk about Sally, when I came upon a roll of painter's canvas. It was a picture. I drew it up to the window, for the evening light was growing dim, and read that it was the portrait of Madeline Teresse, seventeenth Countess of Yarmouth, painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

That was the picture which had been taken out of its frame to keep the servants from knowing the unlucky lady who died so miserably at Padua, in case she thought proper to revisit the hall. I was not very superstitious, but my hair did begin to rise when the waning light shewed me the very image of our unaccountable servant. It was younger, richly dressed in a bygone fashion, and had not the fixed ghastly look; but the resemblance was so striking that I let fall the canvas, and covered my eyes with a fearful conviction that some of the Fenham legends were true.

There was no more poking in the strong room that evening; and after a long debate with myself by our parlour fire, I came to the resolution of telling my mother, and asking her to sit up with me that night.

'We will sit up, Sophy,' she said, 'and try to make out the digging business. But you have been frightened by an accidental resemblance. If the dead do ever return to this earth, it must be for some great providential purpose, and not to frighten honest people in the course of their daily duties. Sally is a strange creature, and, I fear, not of sound mind, though she works wisely enough. It is our best policy to watch closely, but not to let her know that we suspect anything.'

We did watch all that night, with candles ready to light at a minute's warning. Sally had been given to understand we had gone to bed as usual, but all the long night there was no sound in the house; and the very next, when we were both worn out and fast asleep, my mother, whose slumbers were much the lightest, was awaked by the delving in full play, which ceased, as formerly, the moment she came out with her candle. Night after night it was the same. We sat up and watched till our nerves and our courage failed us, without hearing a sound; yet our deepest sleep was broken by the noise of spade or pick clanking against stones, or delving some stubborn soil. Another strange and rather disagreeable circumstance was, that in spite of all our concealment, Sally appeared to know that we had an eye upon her. She watched us in all times and places, and a fiery look of fierce and frantic anger began to burn in her black eyes.

'What are you spying about me for?' she cried, rushing into the parlour one morning as we sat at breakfast. 'What do you get up at night and come out with candles for? There's plenty to make noise about this old house besides me, if all stories are true—and they are true. I have heard them opening the doors, and seen them looking in at the windows. It's a doomed place, an ill-got property, and will never come to good. Leave it, and go back to London as fast as you can.'

'Sally,' said my mother with great composure, though her lips were white, and her servant's eyes looked terrible, 'we do not watch you, but the house, as we are bound to do. If you find it uncomfortable from any cause, I am willing to pay you your wages, and let you leave my service.'

'Wages—service!' muttered Sally, growing suddenly cowed and bewildered; and she slunk out of the room, muttering something else which we could not hear.

Our breakfast was not an important affair after that demonstration. We felt that, whatever the strange creature meant, or might be, it was neither safe nor easy for us to remain in the solitary house in her company, and Sally had evidently no intention of going. She went to her work as usual, and as if nothing had happened. Even my mother did not care to speak to her again on the subject; the dread of her had fallen on us both. But something must be done; and after a thousand plans formed and found impracticable, we thought of taking counsel of the Fairbrothers. A kind of mutual repulsion had existed between them and us, from the first. Ralph never came to the hall except when he was wanted; and his lady's airs were not calculated to make one seek her in the back-room where she chose to abide; but they were our only neighbours, and we took an afternoon walk to the cottage on the following day. I would not leave my mother alone with Sally, though she had been wonderfully steady ever since the morning explosion, and the night had passed without noise. We found Mrs Fairbrother in her accustomed place; she had not been out of bed that winter, and said she did not intend getting up again till May. Ralph had gone to Norwich on his lordship's business; he had no mind but that of his spouse, however, we knew; and after propitiating her with the kindest of inquiries about her health in that trying weather, my mother related our perplexities.

'Sally Steen,' said she, turning her face to the wall, and talking as if to herself; 'I mind the jade well. She took part with that good-for-nothing creature who went off with the captain.' Mrs Fairbrother always spoke of her former mistress with great contempt. 'That was because they were all papists together, and given to the same goings-on. I know it all. It's a digging of her grave she is every night; they do that for penance after uncommon sins; but I'll settle her.'

With this reflection, Mrs Fairbrother got up, took out of her cupboard, hard by her bed, a plum-coloured satin gown, made in the height of the short-waisted fashion, a lace-trimmed mantle of the same antiquity, a beaver hat, and a pair of morocco boots, with exceedingly sharp toes. In these she proceeded to array herself with the alacrity of a person bound on some great enterprise, and then desired us to come along, and she would settle Sally Steen soon enough.

The first thing I saw as we approached the hall, was Sally standing in the grand entrance. She had opened the great door to its full extent, and was gazing out over lawn and lake through the frosty haze with which the winter-day was closing.

The moment Mrs Fairbrother caught sight of her, she dashed forward, crying: 'I'll bring the jade to her senses;' but the next she stopped short, and stood like one terror-struck; while Sally, clearing the steps with one bound, rushed down upon her, the black eyes glaring like those of a lion, and the hard hands clutching as if to tear her in pieces. The gardener's wife knew her danger, and fled screaming across the lawn, but Sally pursued her. Unable to follow or assist, we stood rooted to the spot. They neared the lake; and on its very edge the frantic woman seized her prey, satin gown and all, and dashed her in; but Mrs Fairbrother had a grasp on her straggling hair, and in they went together. We saw them plunge and grapple in the deep water, which surged and heaved as if the struggle were still going on below. Our cries at last brought two of the labourers out of the garden; but all was over; neither ever rose again; and the men said the lake was fathoms deep at that part. It was just where the young squire had pushed in his elder brother; and they could do nothing till Ralph came home.

Ralph did come home next morning; the lake was dragged for the bodies, and they were both found with shocking traces of mutual violence on them. There was a coroner's inquest, and a verdict of homicide and insanity. But in the course of the inquiry it came out—we never could ascertain from what quarter—that the woman who had come as our servant was not Sally Steen, but a crazed nun from the convent of the Sisters of Mercy—said to have lived long on the continent, and been given to strange austerities. The establishment could, or would, give no account of her, but that her name was Sister Magdalene, that she had been allowed to reside in their convent for a few months; and that they believed her of unsound mind. The cause of our nightly disturbance was, however, explained by an examination of the room she had occupied in the hall. Behind her bed the thick wall was broken through, and a clear passage opened into the crypt of the ancient chapel, which had been walled up and forgotten for ages. Its floor had been dug and delved in every direction, as if somebody had been searching for hidden treasure. Two stone-coffins and half a skeleton were laid bare; but the object of her midnight search had not been found; for a year after, when the place was altered and repaired for young Lord Yarmouth, there was discovered, buried deep in the only corner she had left untouched, a pair of massive candlesticks of solid gold, a large crucifix of the same precious metal, and a complete service of plate for the celebration of Catholic worship. I never learned how the Yarmouth family disposed of them; but it was the general belief that they had been hidden there by Squire Richard's chaplain, when the ruin of the Jacobite cause sent his master into exile, and gave the hall to strangers. The ghastly-looking woman must have known something of this, and entered our service on purpose to search for them, with the connivance of the real Sally Steen. That individual was afterwards known to be at service in London; but neither we nor our friends could ever get a sight of her, nor could we ever make out who it was that came in her stead. Ralph Fairbrother, who, by the way, lamented his wife as little as governed men generally do, had a kind of short-hand explanation of the matter which he would never enlarge—it was, that Mrs Fairbrother would have been wiser to have stayed in her bed. She thought it was one of the Steens who had served there long ago, and wanted to shew her airs; but people did not always die when it was said they did, and that drowning business was just the settling of an old account in his opinion. Whether the Yarmouth family agreed with him or not, they shewed a strong inclination to hush up the matter. They paid my mother liberally, and allowed us to leave the hall at the beginning of the New-year. We set up our own little home at Paddington, soon after, and got on wonderfully. My mother has left me for the better country, and I have been called Mrs George Turner these thirty years; but I never hear of a lonely old house in the country without recollecting our unhired servant.

CARLYLE'S HISTORY OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

CONCLUDING ARTICLE.

We left off with a gloomy intimation that days of increasing discord were coming for Friedrich Wilhelm and his son. The sudden death of George I.—most impressively painted by Mr Carlyle—had shaken the spirits of his Prussian majesty to a surprising extent, he 'having fountains of tears withal hidden in the rocky heart of him not suspected by every one.' Then came anxieties as to what political course George II. might take, and, on the other hand, there was a 'huff of quarrel, the consummation of a good many long existing grudges with his neighbour of Saxony, August, king of Poland.' In addition to which, Wilhelmina hints at disturbance of the 'royal digestive apparatus'—a consequence, probably, of 'the frequent carousals with Seckendorf;' so that we need not wonder to be told that his majesty became valetudinary and very melancholy, a state of things much aggravated by a worthy Monsieur Franke, a well-known pietist of the day, who gave ghostly counsel to the king—a pious but lugubrious man, who condemned all pleasures—'damnable all of them, he declared, even hunting and music.' We may easily guess the reactionary effect of this bigotry on the mind of the crown-prince. Plans of abdication, of retirement to Wusterhausen—most dreary of royal rural retreats—began to occupy the king's mind, to the infinite dismay of Seckendorf and Grumkow, who were well aware of the prince's English predilections, and aversion to their line of policy. Something must be done, or their snare will be broken, and their royal prey delivered! A bright thought strikes them: what so desirable as change of scene for hypochondriac symptoms? Of all changes, what so enlivening as a visit to the court of August of Saxony, a 'gay, eupeptic son of Belial,' willing to be reconciled to Prussia, and to overlook certain recruiting irregularities on Saxon territories, for the tall-soldier hobby has got our Friedrich Wilhelm into trouble again in a fresh quarter. By the aid of a little underhand planning and plotting, an invitation to the Dresden carnival is given and accepted, and Friedrich Wilhelm and his son set out thither in the January of 1728. The visit lasted a month, and is chiefly notable to us because of its bearing on the crown-prince. 'Never were there such thrice-magnificent carnival amusements, illuminations, operas, comedies, sow-baitings, reviewings, dinners of never-imagined quality:' other fascinations too, for this Saxon court is a 'wonderful Armida garden, sure enough.' Alas for the youth of sixteen, to whom all this comes in too, *too* 'pleasant contrast with the Potsdam guard-house!' The miseries this visit to a depraved court 'brought into his existence—into his relations with a father very rigorous in principle, and with a universe still more so—were neither few nor small.' The habits now formed continue for the next four or five years. The prince 'consorts chiefly with dissolute young fellows, as Lieutenants Katte, Keith, and others of their stamp.' 'The bright young soul, with its fine strengths and gifts, wallows like a young rhinoceros in the mud-bath; gets out, indeed, but not uninjured—alas! tragically dimmed of its finest radiances for the remainder of life. Enough of all that.'

King August paid a return-visit to Berlin in the May following, and it was 'sublime in the extreme;' the 'frugal Friedrich Wilhelm,' stimulated by the magnificence of Polish majesty, 'lighting up his dim court into insurpassable brilliancy for once, regardless of expense.' Yet, when all was done, the very everyday result, according to Wilhelmina, was, that 'at table they drank much, talked little, and bored one another a great deal.' August of Poland was 'extremely attentive to Wilhelmina, but, by the blessing of Heaven, nothing came of that;' and in Queen Sophie's sanguine soul the double-marriage project was bright as ever. The long-growing disaffection between father and son breaks out. We begin to hear of 'surly gusts of indignation, not unfrequently of cuffs and strokes—still worse, studied neglect and contempt, so as not even to help the prince at table, but to leave him fasting while the others eat.' All this is very hard for a high-spirited youth of seventeen to bear. He writes about this time a most dutiful and submissive letter to his 'dear papa,' imploring to be taken into favour; and receives, in reply, a very implacable, 'ill-spelt, abstruse, and intricate note,' in which he is styled an 'effeminate fellow, who can neither ride nor shoot,' and reproached with 'frizzling his hair like a fool, and not cutting it off.' Here we have the old grievance become chronic. A very cantankerous letter, in short, leading us to suspect much disturbance of the royal digestive apparatus; the more so, as we find that a few months later the king, after much fierce riding, 'after an unparalleled hunting-bout, during which 3602 wild swine were slaughtered, was laid up at Potsdam—with—a fit of gout—gout!—which is a terrible message to a man.' 'His majesty's age is not forty-one till August coming; but he has hunted furiously'—and then those carousals with Seckendorf. Yet here the better side of his character begins to reappear.

Though Friedrich Wilhelm 'suffered extremely, he never neglected his royal duties in any press of pain.' Content with but an hour or two of sleep, the 'top of the morning' is always devoted to his official secretaries and their papers. After dinner, he would paint in oil, or do light prince-work. Sickness, so often an angel in the house, has brought the wife, too, back to her duty. 'Always at the head of the bed sat her majesty the queen, sometimes with the king's hand laid in hers, and his face turned up to her as if he sought assuagement.' 'Sometimes, too, the crown-prince read aloud in some French book, with a voice of melodious clearness.' True, there is a reverse side to this pleasing picture. His majesty has spurts of impatience; and certain men, in spite of his esteem for them, become personally antipathetic, and 'make his gout worse;' yet surely, on the whole, this sick-bed affords a pleasing interlude, if it had not been for the kaiser and his pragmatic sanction!

Friedrich is all the more steadfast, because kaiser's cause now appears exclusively German. He diligently drills his sixty thousand men, and 'changes his tune to wife and children,' according to the public news. If England favour the emperor, he smiles on the domestic circle; if England frown on the pragmatic sanction, 'crockery flies through the rooms of the Prussian palace, and blows descend on the poor prince's back.' Nor does Wilhelmina escape. She, too, warmly attached as she is to her brother, and suspected of connivance in his and the queen's underhand schemes, is become painfully obnoxious to her violent-tempered father. At her head, too, plates are thrown, at her blows are aimed—all which brutality Mr Carlyle charges mainly on the two 'devil diplomatists Grumkow and Seckendorf,' seldom if ever blaming his hero, but earnestly regretting that no one could have 'got a bit of rope, and hanged these two diplomatic swindlers, as clearly of the scoundrel genus.'

A note from Frederick to his mother, dated Potsdam, December 1729, gives us a painful insight into his trials. 'The king,' he writes, 'has entirely forgotten that I am his son. This morning I came into his room, as usual. At the first sight of me, he sprang forward, seized me by the collar, and struck me a shower of cruel blows with his rattan. . . . . I am driven to extremity; I have too much honour to endure such treatment, and I am resolved to put an end to it in one way or another.' In what way, unfortunate prince? Wilhelmina knows too well, though she strives to reassure her anxious mother. Flight is not a new idea to her sorely oppressed brother, who is not quite without faults, though, on his side too.

If only he would choose better companions, sighs Wilhelmina, and lead a more regular life. Lieutenant Keith, a 'wild companion' enough, is gone, it is true; but he is succeeded by one still more dangerous—by a young Captain Katte, of whom we shall hear much more anon. 'He had wit, book-culture, acquaintance with the world, polite manners,' all which recommended him, no doubt, to the favour of the prince; but again, 'he affected the free-thinker, and carried libertinism to excess,' and was too surely a dangerous adviser here in the Berlin element with lightnings going. And still, in the midst of all other difficulties, there is the great central difficulty, the double-marriage treaty hanging fire—the king of Prussia now insisting that it shall only be a single marriage—willing, and indeed thankful, to dispose of Wilhelmina to the English Fred, but resolute against the union of the obnoxious Fritz to the Princess Amelia. However, the English answer being steadily 'both marriages or none,' the negotiation may be considered virtually extinct, when, in the month of June 1730, Friedrich Wilhelm and his son set out to the camp of Radewitz, which was 'one of the sublimest scenic military exhibitions in the history of the world.' 'In this pleasure-camp, where the eyes of so many strangers were directed to him, the crown-prince was treated like a disobedient boy,' 'mockery added to manual outrage,' 'beaten like a slave while lodged like a royal highness.' Little wonder that the poor prince should make up his mind to run; should concoct schemes of flight with Katte at Berlin; should discover in the projected tour to the Reich, in which he is to accompany his father, and in the nearness to the French side of the Rhine which this tour will insure, facilities for escape, and eventually for reaching England.

In July, this tour was taken. Friedrich Wilhelm, 'driven nearly mad' himself—never quite sane, we suspect—'by fate and the two black-artists, is driving everybody so.' He takes the crown-prince with him lest he run away, and yet bullies him as a spiritless wretch for submitting to such treatment. A more painful history than this of their journey to the Reich it were impossible to conceive. As they sail down the Rhine, the final catastrophe occurs. A letter is found from the crown-prince to Katte; 'the treasonable flight-project is indisputable as the sun at noon.' At Bonn, the prince confides it all to Seckendorf—how that he could no longer stand indignities, actual strokes; how that, but for his mother's and his sister's sake, he would have fled long ago; that for a life such as his had become, he cared little. Would the king but pardon the poor gentlemen he had implicated, he would disclose everything—'a noble and touching confidence this, made to Seckendorf,' the fountain of all his woes. Seckendorf pleads for him to the king; but the first thing done on their return to Berlin is the arrest of the prince, and of poor young Katte too. 'The scenes that follow,' observes Mr Carlyle, 'are unusual in royal history, and have been reported in the world with infinite noise and censure, made up of laughter and horror. What we can well say is, that pity also ought not to be wanting. The next six months were undoubtedly by far the wretchedest of Friedrich Wilhelm's life.' His violence to his daughter was fearful. She was ordered to her room, and there kept prisoner on low diet, with sentries guarding her doors. As for the crown-prince, he is sent forward to Cüstrin, 'a quiet little town, some seventy miles eastward of Berlin, and lodged in a strong room of the fortress there; no furniture, not even the needfulest; bare walls, lighted from far up; his dress of the plainest prison-cut; his diet fixed at tenpence a day, absolute solitude; no books, except the Bible:' there and thus 'let him wait, till the rather abstruse question of his doom ripen in the royal breast.' Grumkow and Seckendorf are against all violent methods. At length, after six or seven weeks of consultation, it is settled in the tobacco-parliament that Katte and the crown-prince be tried by court-martial as deserters from the Prussian army. Meanwhile, the prince, immured in four bare walls, 'in uninterrupted, unfathomable colloquy with the destinies and necessities,' puts off his defiant humour, and by the middle of October makes a proposal of entire confession. Grumkow is often out at Cüstrin, persuading to the duty of loyally yielding where resistance is impossible. It is a relief, too, to find that the stern regulations with regard to the royal prisoner are gradually ignored by the officials surrounding him. A clever little boy of seven, son to the governor, is allowed to enter the cell, and his little frock being lined with a row of pockets, many things are thus surreptitiously introduced that lighten the horrors of the bare walls. Paper, ink, new literature, and much else, find their way in.

It is on the 25th of October that the court-martial commences work. It decides, after an inquiry of six days, that the accomplices of the crown-prince are two—first, Lieutenant Keith, who, warned by his young master at the time of the explosion on the Rhine, is off, cannot be caught; let him, therefore, be hanged in effigy, cut in four quarters, and nailed to the gallows at Wesel. This sentence his majesty approves. Second, Lieutenant Katte, two years of fortress-arrest to him. 'Not good this,' thinks the inflexible king. The court-martial has to revise this part of the sentence, to bring in Katte's crime high treason, and the penalty—death—death by the headsman and sword, not by the gallows and hot pincers. So far the king's clemency will go. Poor Katte is only twenty-six—surely his fate is very hard.

Five days after the passing of this sentence, it is intimated to him that the carriage intended to take him to Cüstrin is at that moment waiting at the gate—that at Cüstrin he is to die. It was in the gray of the winter morning, 6th of November 1730, that Katte arrived in Cüstrin garrison; about nine o'clock he is on the road towards the rampart of the castle, where a scaffold stands. The prince is already brought down into a lower room to see Katte as he passes ('to see Katte die,' had been the fiendish order of this perhaps poetic, but certainly brutal king). 'His emotions may be fancied but not described.' Again and again he implored, in God's name, that the execution might be stopped till he wrote to his father. 'Impossible!' Oh, the agony of that impossible! 'And so here Katte comes, cheerful loyalty beaming in his face. "Pardonnez moi, mon cher Katte. O that this should be what I have done for you!"

'"Death is sweet for a prince I love so well," said Katte, and so on, round some angle of the fortress to his death—not in sight of Frederick, who sank into a faint, and had seen the last of Katte in this world.'

This fearful blow, it is evident, 'crushed him down under the immensity of sorrow, confusion, and despair.' Chaplain Müller, who had prepared young Katte for his end, and remained with him to the last, has orders to stay on at Cüstrin, and seek to reclaim Frederick from certain theological errors which his father suspects and mourns over. This worthy man's correspondence with the king was of 'an assuaging, mutually mollifying character.' He reported 'an excellent knowledge and conviction of the truths of religion in the crown-prince—nay, that he was perfectly at home in the polemic doctrines of the Reformed Calvinistic Church, even to the minutest points.' Meanwhile, the miserable Friedrich Wilhelm could not sleep, had officers to sit up with him every night, and in his slumbers raves and talks of spirits and apparitions. He is occupied in discussing with eight divines a father's unconditional right to give his daughter in marriage to whom he pleases, and—melancholy instance of inconsistency—while agonising over his son's spiritual peril from unsound theories on predestination, his own practice was that of 'never going to bed sober.' As for the sentence pronounced by the court-martial on Frederick, that was severe enough to suit this modern Junius Brutus—as lieutenant-colonel, guilty of desertion, president and members, with the exception of two, have judged him worthy of death. 'But the king's councillors, one and all, interfere vehemently, foreign courts interpose, the kaiser sends an autograph,' and 'Friedrich Wilhelm alone, against the whispers of his own heart and the voices of all men, yields—Friedrich's life is to be spared.' We have seen how thoroughly subdued the spirit of the crown-prince had by this time become. In a fortnight after poor Katte's death, he is found ready to sign an oath of 'contrite repentance, and purpose of future entire obedience to the paternal will in all things;' whereupon his sword was restored to him, and his prison-door opened. From Cüstrin fortress he is led to a certain town-mansion, which he is to call his own henceforth, and has a household even in the form of a court, 'though probably the cheapest that was ever set up.' Further, he has employment cut out for him: 'he is to learn economics, and the way of managing domain lands, and is left wholly to himself, save, indeed, that his fellow-creatures are all watching him, and that nothing that he can say or do escapes discussion in the tobacco-parliament. This life, for the youth of eighteen, lasted fifteen months, and of the many lessons that it taught him perhaps the best learned was 'the art of wearing among his fellow-creatures a polite cloak of darkness.' Gradually, he became 'a man politely impregnable to the intrusion of human curiosity; able to look cheerily into the very eyes of men, and talk in a social way face to face, and yet continue intrinsically invisible to them.' The turning-point in this Cüstrin life was the visit of Friedrich Wilhelm to his son, just thirteen months after the catastrophe on the Rhine. We read, with rather a painful suspicion of insincerity, of the crown-prince's abject submission, of his professions of deep repentance, conversion to orthodoxy, according to his father's definition of the word, and devoted filial attachment. We marvel that poor Katte's fate should not have recurred to his mind, to temper the ardour of his protestations. But, according to Mr Carlyle's view of the case, 'this crown-prince has a real affection to his father, as we shall in time convince ourselves. Say, at least, that he is a crown-prince, loyal to fact, and aware that he must surrender thereto.' Nevertheless, there are passages in the correspondence of a certain General Schulenberg, 'instructed by his majesty quietly to keep a monitorial eye on the prince,' with Baron Grumkow, which lead one back to a less favourable theory. The morals acquired at the court of that 'pleasant man of sin,' August of Saxony, do not appear much modified by Cüstrin discipline; and, spite of outward orthodoxy on the subject of predestination, there were 'plenty of heterodoxies, plenty of strange mutinous fire in the interior of the young man.' Meanwhile, at Berlin, Wilhelmina, betrothed to the Prince of Baireuth, sees her wedding-day draw near; and Friedrich Wilhelm, in his arbitrary way, is energetic in pushing forward building in Berlin; all men 'with the least capital being squeezed hard till they build.' Friedrich's *strasse*, once 'scrag and quagmire,' was made a substantial, clean street, straight as a line, by these hard methods. 'These things were heavy to bear' for the citizens, but pleasant enough to witness for a king who 'is the edile of his country as well as the drill-sergeant, and intent upon sweeping wreck and rubbish from the face of the earth.' On the whole, his life seems much brightened during the last six months—Wilhelmina's 'magnificent wedding' coming off in the November of 1731, and her brother appearing at one of the balls given on the joyous occasion. Changed, she tells us—his face no longer so beautiful as it had been, grown stouter, cold as ice toward this sister once and still so fondly loved, proud, seeming to 'look down on everybody;' and he is not nineteen, this young wearer of the cloak of darkness.

However, the father's heart is softened to his children; he parts with Wilhelmina with sobs and tears of tenderness; and on the last day of February 1732, the crown-prince, completely restored to favour, puts on again the military blue coat as colonel of his regiment, 'never to doff it more.' He did his military duties to a perfection satisfactory even to his father. So far all seems going on well; but another question has arisen in the tobacco-parliament—the prince must marry. Whom shall the crown-prince marry? For his part, he does not much care—'the romance is all over.' He looks, however, to outward advantages, and especially to 'ready command of money.' Could but the crown-prince of Prussia have wedded the Archduchess Maria Theresa—the very mate for him, Mr Carlyle thinks, 'so beautiful, magnanimous, and brave.' This, however, is forbidden by the 'papal-protestant' controversy. The imperial court, however friendly, cannot offer its archduchess—can only recommend an 'insignificant niece,' Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick Baden, who by no means suits the prince's notions, unromantic though he be grown. 'Modest and retiring, a God-fearing creature'—thus Friedrich Wilhelm commends—'given to pouting, a blockhead, and, worse, a devotee,' so the prince decries the object of the paternal choice. But the prince seems to have thought better of his bride on a nearer acquaintance; and in the summer of 1733, the wedding took place, the bride being described by the not too partial Wilhelmina as dazzling in complexion, with blond curling hair, and a countenance so innocent and infantine, you might think it belonged to a child of twelve.

Besides these personal charms, this young wife turned out possessed of an 'honest, guileless heart,' and of 'considerable inarticulate sense;' and seems 'to have shaped herself successfully to the prince's taste.' 'These first seven years she always regarded as the flower of her life.' Probably, their most important event, as bearing upon the after-life and character of her husband, was the beginning of his correspondence with Voltaire. Always an admirer of French literature, Voltaire's epic poem, 'model history, sublime tragedies' bloom fresh in Frederick's memory and heart; nor has Voltaire's philosophy less charm for him. This correspondence, begun when Frederick was only twenty-four, and Voltaire forty, lasted during their mutual life, with notable interruptions, however. 'With another theory of the universe than the Voltaire one, how much *other* had Frederick, too, been; for, however bitter their quarrels, it is certain that 'Voltaire continued to be Frederick's chief thinker all his days,' and was officially priest and prophet to the working-king. Literature was the great light of the crown-prince's present existence, and his 'chosen soul's employment the flower of life;' to him was the writing of his first book—the Anti-Macchiavel—a work which Mr Carlyle characterises as a clear distinct treatise indeed; yet, 'treatise fallen more extinct to existing mankind, it would not be easy to name.'

But we must hurry on. These days of 'free interchange of poetries and proses,' of devotion to literature, philosophy, and music—this 'idyl' in his stormy life is nearly over.

In the November of 1739, 'there is game, as usual, at Wusterhausen, but little or no hunting for the king'—his health has been breaking up rapidly these last few years. One severe attack in the autumn of 1734 he got over, contrary to all expectation; now, this chill caught at an evening-party at General Schulenberg's—is this the death-stroke? He is much in and out of bed—still does his official business with punctuality—can paint, whittle, chisel as in that fit of gout twelve years ago; but he rallies little, and but for a short time, during all the long winter. The spring seems to revive him somewhat, and towards the end of April he resolved to move to Potsdam. The public thought he was recovering; 'he himself knew other.' It was on the 27th that he went; he said: 'Fare-thee-well, then, Berlin; I am to die in Potsdam.'

On Thursday the 26th of May, an express reaches Frederick: 'He is to come quickly if he would see his father again alive. He comes in all haste to find his father rallied for a while—out of doors even. At sight of his son, the king threw out his arms; the son, kneeling, sank upon his breast, and they embraced with tears.' Perhaps the emotion was too much; the king had to be carried in at once, and bed was the only place for him. That very day, he gave instructions about his funeral.

He has had his coffin ready for some time, 'a stout piece of carpentry, at which he looks with satisfaction, remarking how well he shall sleep there.' For the next three days, he had long private dialogues with his son; these two hearts understood each other at last. Once he says to his sympathetic generals: 'Am I not happy to have such a beloved son?' 'His state now was fluctuating, uncertain, restless: the wild son of nature looking into life and death, into judgment and eternity, finds that these things are very great.' He prays much; he has his favourite hymns sung to him; he takes leave of his chaplain; he kisses his little boy of four for the last time. Then—it is the 31st of May—he has himself rolled into Queen Sophie's room; he tells her that he is going to die, and that she must be with him. He resolves to abdicate wholly in favour of his good son Frederick in the presence of his ministers. Before the declaration can be read through, he faints away, and is carried to bed. Still there were ups and downs—'the cordage of a most strong heart rending itself piece by piece.' It was the season when his servants got their new liveries. 'O vanity! O vanity!' cries the king at the sight. 'Pray for me; my trust is in the Saviour,' he often said. He will have a mirror brought to look at his dying face. 'Feel my pulse, Pitsch,' said he to the surgeon of his favourite regiment. 'How long will this last?'

'The pulse is gone!' was the sorrowful reply.

'Impossible! How could I move my fingers so?' The surgeon shakes his head.

'Lord Jesus, to thee I live, to thee I die.' These were Friedrich Wilhelm's last words. Between one and two o'clock that afternoon, he died. That night, Frederick went to Berlin, met by acclamations enough. The next morning, he was wakened by the regiment under his windows swearing fealty to the new king. Pöllnitz found him hurrying distractedly to and fro, wildly weeping.

'*He* was in great suffering,' suggested Pöllnitz; 'he is now at rest.'

'True,' replied the young king; 'he suffered, but he was here with us; and now'——

Here Mr Carlyle ends his very remarkable work, the interest of which it were scarcely possible to exaggerate. But it is an interest fraught with deepest melancholy. We borrow the words of an acute critic as best explaining why the historical writings of Mr Carlyle have so depressing an influence on the mind of the reader: 'Their mood is for the most part ironical. There is philanthropy, doubtless, at the bottom of it all; but a mocking spirit, a profound and pungent irony, are the manifest and prevailing characteristics. It is philanthropy which has borrowed the manner of Mephistophiles.'

COUSIN ABEL.

I AM myself of a modest and retiring disposition, averse to self-assertion and egotism. Independence of character seems to me little better than social isolation, and I much prefer to it a residence upon the great continent of Commonplace. It may be well imagined that I have let slip many opportunities of greatness through this ultra bashfulness; high social positions; vast sums of money; the hand and fortune of a March—but this is boastfulness, a weakness as foreign to my character as angry passions to the lily.

Nature, however—with the theory of compensation in her mind, perhaps, at the time of his creation—has formed my Cousin Abel in a very different mould. I doubt, indeed, whether his indomitable spirit ever brooked to be *moulded*, even in her plastic hands. He must have leaped out of her head, full armed for controversy, like the goddess of old. He was, from his earliest youth, what Mr Leech's miner denominated the conciliating curate, 'a beggar to argue,' a stiffish one to tackle upon any mortal subject; and for the matter of *that*, he would contradict a bishop upon his own ground. Indeed, my first recollection of him dates from a combat which he held, *à l'outrance*, with no less a person than his own diocesan, a courtly spiritual lord, who had married into the temporal peerage without any decrease, we may be sure, of his own dignified and superior bearing. It was after dinner; and the company, who were mostly clerical, were discussing, in addition to some excellent port, one of Paley's celebrated cases of conscience, where he affirms, for various excellent reasons, that it is permissible for a fashionable person's servant to declare that his master or mistress be 'not at home,' when, as a matter of fact, they are at home. The bishop and the majority of the clergy controverted this position, and my cousin—probably on that account—sustained it.

'You should direct your servant to say that you are "particularly engaged,"' quoth his lordship.

'That would very much incense *me*, if I happened to be the visitor,' replied my cousin; 'and beside that, I should not believe him.'

'Then the lady or gentleman should cause the servant to state in plain words, so that there could be no mistake, the nature of the occupation in which his master or mistress was engaged. The visitor would thereby perceive that the excuse was in reality valid and sufficient.'

'Then, if myself and Mrs Abel were to call at the palace to-morrow, in your absence, my lord, and your wife happened to be washing her feet, do you mean to say that your servant would have orders to inform us that the Lady Christiana was at that moment'——

At this point, however, the bishop hastened to give in to my cousin's opinion; and indeed there was no knowing what supposititious cases he might not have put.

When Cousin Abel was a very young man indeed, he chose to fly in the face of his whole family—who are extremely 'genteel'—by going into trade, and becoming the partner of a far-away cousin who had disgraced himself in the linen-drapery line. Whereupon the baronet of our race—for we do possess *one* (as you would soon discover if you were acquainted with any one of us), who is our *Deus ex machina* upon all similar occasions, was requested to bring the weight of his position and advice to bear upon his erring young relative; and he was kind enough to do so. His oration was doubtless very eloquent, as it certainly was very prolonged; and Sir Richard imagined at the end of it—so humble and resigned had the victim seemed from first to last—that he had shaken Cousin Abel's purpose until every leaf of it had fallen to the ground. When all was over, however, the young man had just one question to ask.

'By the by, Sir Richard, you, who know everything, will perhaps be kind enough to inform me—— But stay; I have forgotten the name: what *is* the name of that great capitalist in the city?'

'Rothschild?'

'No, Sir Richard—not Rothschild.'

'Baring?'

'No, sir; thank you very much, but not Baring either.'

'Jones Loyd, that was?'

'That's it! Yes, Jones Loyd. Can you inform me, Sir Richard—and it is the only remark I have to offer upon your most judicious and condescending advice—how that Jones Loyd made his money?'

'No, Mr Abel, I really can *not*,' replied the baronet, annoyed at the young man's persistency.

'Why, he got it entirely by minding his own business, Sir Richard; *by minding his own business.*'

And Cousin Abel signed his articles of partnership the very next day.

One more example to illustrate my cousin's character, and there will then be no possible misunderstanding of it. When his wife died, to whom he was, in truth, devotedly attached, nothing annoyed him more, except her death, than the commiserations and condolences of his friends. He is one of these pitiable persons who ignore the advantages of friendship and sympathy, and hang upon their lonely hooks in the great human larder, until they are good for nothing and offensive to everybody.

'It must have been a great trial to you, sir,' observed an incautious acquaintance, referring to my cousin's late bereavement; 'it must have been a very great trial.' 'A trial, sir?' exclaimed the exasperated widower: 'it was not only a trial, sir, but, let me tell *you*, a matter also of very considerable expense!'

How Cousin Abel came by this cynical and independent temper of his, I have not, as was before observed, the least idea; but one really would think that he had lost (not his life, but) his liver, in the civil service of the East India Company—he is such a very obstinate and pig-headed old gentleman. Nevertheless, I am bound to say that—at the loss of friendships, of good temper, of kindly feeling, of all, in a word, that constitutes social happiness—Cousin Abel has made his way in the world. It is almost as impossible to 'do' him, to overreach or hoodwink him in any way, as to persuade him out of an opinion. On the rare occasions, therefore, when this too astute relative of mine *is* 'done,' there is joy in the heart of everybody who knows him; and he was 'done' upon a recent occasion, as follows, very completely.

In the town where my Cousin Abel lives, there had been a great many storms connected with local politics, and the atmosphere was only cleared at last by no less a thunderbolt than a murder. At a certain committee meeting of the 'party of order' and of 'civil and religious liberty' combined, one gentleman who was making some personal remarks was knocked on the head by another gentleman who didn't like them; and the first gentleman paid the penalty with his life. Of the assault there was no doubt whatever, but the difficulty lay in proving that the accused used any weapon. The mortal wound had clearly been inflicted by means of a blunt instrument, which had perforated the skull nearly two inches, and which could scarcely have been the prisoner's thumb. There was no such instrument in the committee-room, or found upon the prisoner's person, and the jury were sadly puzzled, and could come to no decision at all.

Cousin Abel happened to be serving his country—it is needless to say, compulsorily—by being one of the twelve, and the most cantankerous—it is equally needless to add—of the whole lot. They were locked up, after the court rose, in an apartment of a little inn, with nothing to eat; the evening was far advanced, and there were a pair of flaring 'dips' upon the table, but no snuffers. It was upon this grievance that my cousin's intelligent mind was solely concentrated, rather to the exclusion of the life-and-death matter then on hand. Why was he not provided with snuffers? That was what he wanted to know, when consulted by his brother-jurymen about the murder. 'Food and firing,' urged he, 'the law was able to deprive them of, since they could not agree; but the law never contemplated this depriving them of snuffers; and he, for one, would insist upon his rights.' 'The snuffers!' demanded he, when his angry tugs at the bell were answered by a policeman, instead of a waiter; and, 'bring me the snuffers, you villain!' was his cry out of window, to the landlord, whenever he could catch a sight of him.

Had it not been for this distracting omission, there is little doubt that my cousin would have given in his vote against the prisoner, since his heart by no means naturally leant to mercy's side; but he was exasperated by the neglect of his wishes, and more than ever inclined to oppose singly any conclusion arrived at by eleven of his fellow-countrymen; so that, when they at last decided upon a verdict of 'guilty,' they found their brother-juryman only less determined upon 'not guilty,' than he was upon procuring the snuffers. These last, indeed, he never managed to obtain; but the verdict—thanks to his powerful constitution, and to some walnuts, which he had in his pocket—he did manage to get changed, after twenty-four hours; and the prisoner was consequently acquitted.

Now, it happened that the landlord of the inn was a personal crony of the accused party, and knew well enough, himself, with what instrument the crime had been committed. His passionate friend had, unobserved, taken up the snuffers, which lay upon the committee-room table, and inflicted the wound with their point; and thence it was that the jury were denied a pair, for fear the appearance of them should at once remove their difficulty by suggesting the real weapon which had been employed.

Cousin Abel fumed and fretted enough, we may be certain, when he came to learn the mistake into which his obstinacy had led him; and I know of scarcely anything which, to this day, puts up his irascible back more easily than any allusion to Snuffers.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

The close of last year brought good news from Africa, and intelligence of travels and explorations in other quarters. Dr Livingstone had succeeded in getting up the river as far as Tete, and further, and seemed hopeful of accomplishing his object. Great was the joy of his Makalolo, who had waited so long for his return, at seeing him again, though thirty of the faithful fellows had been carried off by small-pox, and six killed by a rebel chief. The health of the Europeans was good; but the engine of the steam-launch disappointed expectation, and had been named the *Asthmatic.* About thirty hundredweights of coal, the first ever dug in that region, had been got, of good quality; a deposit of specular iron-ore had been discovered, and ebony, teak, and lignum-vitæ in the forests on the river-banks. One point worth notice is, that Dr Livingstone thinks the river will prove to be easily navigable in all seasons for a vessel drawing not more than thirty inches, if the Portuguese will only drive in a few piles in places where a channel should be scoured.

The news from the Niger expedition is favourable; the new steamer *Sunbeam* had entered the river, and will, it is hoped, make a successful trip up to Timbuctoo.—The emperor of Brazil has commissioned a scientific expedition to explore the interior of his empire, and take note of its botany, mineralogy, geology, and zoology, as well as to determine latitudes by astronomical observations, from which important results are anticipated. The party are all native Brazilians, animated with a desire to shew that their country is in earnest in its endeavours after knowledge and civilisation.—Another expedition is set on foot in Australia, headed by Major Warburton, to try once more to get from south to north. Certain travellers who crossed Lake Torrens, and were then missing for a while, and given up as lost, made their way down to the coast, and report that they found the interior to be well watered, and not a desert, as is commonly believed.—At St Petersburg, a report has lately been published, received from a Russian traveller on the Amour, giving particulars of the botany and geography of the country watered by that great river. There are large forests of valuable timber, and on the borders of the Ussuri, a river flowing out of China, he found the sparse Chinese population familiar with the potato, cultivating it as an ordinary article of food, on an alluvial soil eminently fertile. The mouth of the Amour, under 53 degrees north, is in a less favourable climate than its upper course: snow falls within the first ten days of October; the river is frozen by the middle of November, an intense cold follows, and the navigation remains closed till the end of the first week in May. Hence, vessels can enter the river only during six months of the year. While thus engaged in the far north-east, Russia is actively pushing her trade-enterprise in Europe; and amongst her latest schemes is one for a line of steamers up the Rhion to Tiflis. There is deep policy in all these commercial undertakings; they result in increase of influence as well as of wealth.

In the United States, another polar expedition is talked of. Dr Hayes has read a paper to the Geographical Society of New York, shewing that with a vessel of one hundred tons and a dozen men, he will make his way up Smith's Sound, verify Dr Kane's discoveries, and push on to the pole. We should be glad to see Brother Jonathan try his hand once more in the arctic regions, and emulate the scientific researches there carried on by British explorers. The coming summer will, it is thought, bring news of him, and of his search for traces of Sir John Franklin.

Notwithstanding the failure of the Atlantic cable, electric telegraphs are making progress. The line from Sydney to Adelaide and Melbourne is at work; the cable laid from Galle across the Strait of Manaar to Madras is now open to the public. The coast-line from Madras to Calcutta is complete, and in November last, the arrival of the overland mail at Galle was signaled to Calcutta in twenty-four hours. The line from Kurachee to Bombay is also complete; and now there is not a city of importance in India which is not in telegraphic communication with the seat of government.—It has been suggested that a cable laid from the Cape de Verds to St Paul's in Brazil, a distance of about 900 miles, would be the easiest way of communicating with South America. Meanwhile, Professor Trowbridge in his report addressed to the superintendent of the United States Coast-survey, denies the existence of the plateau said to stretch along the bottom of the Atlantic from Newfoundland to Ireland, drawing his conclusions from two sets of soundings made in the most careful manner. He ascribes a general untrustworthiness to the deep-sea soundings which were much talked about a year or two ago. He thinks it demonstrated that the friction of even a small line when a great length is run out, is sufficient to hold the lead in suspension, and that the true way would be to have the coil of line enclosed within the lead, so that the lead as it sinks shall not have to drag the line after it. This is a suggestion which perhaps may be turned to account by practical men. Time would be saved by a weight descending at a uniform rate, irrespective of depth. At present, it takes one hour and a half to sink 3000 fathoms. Professor Trowbridge believes the range of error in the Atlantic soundings to be 500 fathoms, which if correct, shews that high hills may have altogether escaped discovery by the vessels employed in taking the depth.

Mr Hearder of Plymouth, a name deservedly well known in electrical science, makes it appear that the construction of the Atlantic cable was essentially faulty, the conductor being much too small. He explains the law that, if we take a length of copper-wire as a conductor, we find that a wire of twice the thickness will conduct twice as well. A wire good for two hundred miles will not be good for a thousand, unless ten times thicker. Moreover, although gutta-percha is a good insulator, there is a constant loss of signaling power, for the electricity oozes out along the whole length of the cable. The discussion of these views will perhaps lead to the desired improvement, and we entertain no doubt of eventual success in establishing telegraphic communication across the Atlantic. Mr Hearder says that the present cable need not be regarded as lost, but may be employed as the return-wire, instead of working, in technical phrase, 'to earth;' whereby a considerable saving of power would be effected. While matters are maturing for a new attempt, a company has started for a comprehensive system of telegraphic communication throughout London. They propose to stretch their wires above the house-tops, and send messages for a uniform charge of 4d.

An interesting paper read before the Society of Arts by Mr Wray has given cotton-spinners, and cotton-growers too, something important to think about. The quantity required by England annually is 920,000,000 pounds. The United States cultivates 7,000,000 acres of cotton, and produces 3,000,000 bales. According to Mr Wray, there are in India double that number of acres under cotton, producing from 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 bales a year for home consumption—that is, for India itself. This is a fact not generally known; it may be accepted as an indication that cotton-growing in our reconquered empire is hopefully extensible; and with labourers, willing to work for 6s. a month, Mr Wray recommends Englishmen to start and cultivate on their own account, instead of buying from the natives.

Among the special prizes offered by the Society of Arts in their list just published, is their gold medal, 'for the discovery of a substitute for cotton, to be produced in such quantities and at such cost as will render it available for commercial and manufacturing purposes.' We notice besides a few items from the general list. An account is wanted of the stones used for building purposes in the United Kingdom; of the methods at present in use for ventilating coal-mines, with suggestions for improvement; and of a new and economic means of producing aluminum commercially. Prizes are held out for the discovery or manufacture of a new smokeless fuel; for improvements in dyeing and new dyeing materials; for elastic gas-tubes; for oils from coal, shale, &c., suitable for illuminating purposes; for railway transit on common roads; and 'for the production of an efficient means of carrying out the system of oceanic electric telegraphs between distant countries.' These are but a few selected from a long list of practical subjects, in which ingenuity of every kind may find exercise. The plans or essays are to be sent in by the 31st of March in this year, or 1860.

Further progress has been made in various places with gunnery experiments. A gun, recently manufactured by Mr Armstrong of Newcastle-on-Tyne, on being tried at Shoeburyness, sent a thirty-two pound ball a distance of 9600 yards—more than five miles: an astonishing result with so heavy a ball. At 625 yards distance, the ball penetrates solid oak nine feet in thickness. There is another advantage of mighty import connected with this singular piece of artillery, that it works with unerring accuracy by night as well as day.—Captain Blakely shews that it is quite possible to make cannon and mortars which shall bombard a place effectually at a distance of five miles; but the things must be properly made. It is now ascertained that increasing the thickness of a cannon or mortar does not make it proportionately stronger; and for the reason that, as the discharge is so sudden, the outside bears no part of the strain. The same reasoning applies to the hydraulic press. The remedy lies—as demonstrated by Mr Longridge, at a meeting of the United Service Institution—in using coils of wire. He makes his cylinder of iron not more than three-quarters of an inch thick, and binds it round with wire, sixteen to the inch, till the wire forms a continuous layer half an inch thick, by which the thickness of the cylinder is increased to an inch and a quarter. Thin as this is, in comparison with cylinders constructed in the ordinary way, it is found to bear an inside pressure of seven tons to the inch. Thus, light cannon bound round with wire, will be far more serviceable than thick heavy cannon.

We are reminded by these remarkable facts of a communication made some time ago to the Philosophical Society of Manchester by Mr John Graham, 'On the Consumption of Coals, and rate of Evaporation from Engine-boilers.' The conclusions arrived at, after a course of painstaking experiments, were, that James Watt's wagon-shaped boiler is the best; 'that a supplementary boiler, under very favourable circumstances, gives a saving of 15 per cent.;' that scraping the flues and sides of the boiler once a week saves 2 per cent.; 'that a difference in the setting alone of the same boiler may readily produce a difference in the result amounting to 21 per cent.;' and 'that a difference in firing only will produce a difference in the result of 13 per cent.' The prevention of 'scale'—that is, the incrustation formed on the inside of boilers—is shewn to be perfectly possible; and besides this, a fact comes out which, to many persons, will be astonishing. 'When a boiler,' says Mr Graham, 'is worked solely for the purpose of heating, by means of its steam, dye-vessels, soap-cisterns, &c., if we take its available power with the steam at 2½ pounds pressure as equal to 100; at 7 pounds pressure it will be 120, and at 10 pounds it will be 130; the same quantity of coals being consumed in each case. Or this surprising result, at present unaccounted for, may be thus stated: The same weight of coals consumed in the same number of hours, will work ten cisterns with the steam at 2½ pounds' pressure, twelve cisterns at 7 pounds, and thirteen cisterns at 10 pounds.'

We hear of a plan by Mr Richardson for getting rid of the smoke of private houses, without alterations of the fireplace. He erects an iron pedestal in one of the upper rooms, into which the smoke from the chimneys is led, and there washed by numerous jets of water, with which it descends into a drain, and so is carried away without rising at all into the air. At the same time, the waste heat from the fires warms the room through the pedestal, and a supply of water may be kept hot for household uses.

In the matter of decimalisation, that which government refuses to do, is, like many other useful things, undertaken by private enterprise. Liverpool and Hull are discontinuing the use of the common hundredweight, that is, 112 pounds, and adopting instead thereof the 'cental,' which, as its name indicates, is a weight of one hundred pounds. This is a wise proceeding, and is following up what was done long ago by France and the United States. How long will it be before London, so proud of its Cockneyism, will follow the example?

There are a few words to be said, and of gratifying import, concerning the Patent Office—a subject in which art and science are deeply interested. Any person seeking information may now apply at the office in Southampton Buildings, sure of civility, and of not being called on to pay a fee for every question to which he requires an answer. The specifications as far back as the reign of James II. have been printed and arranged for easy reference; hence, before taking out a patent, it is now possible to discover whether anything of the kind has been patented before, without the wearisome, disappointing, and expensive task of searching the rolls. What those rolls were, many inventors know to their sorrow; there was no attempt at classification; and a Dundee man, once searching for a specification of a mode of dressing flax, found it next to a lord-chancellor's letter of resignation. Besides this, sundry old and scarce treatises by early inventors have been reprinted for sale; a special library and collection of portraits is in course of formation, so that, altogether, the Patent Office stands out as a bright spot in our civil service, highly creditable to Mr Bennett Woodcroft. We hear that a new office is to be built in the vacant ground behind Burlington House, where the several collections and documents may be seen and consulted with ample space and accommodation.

In a paper read before the Geological Society, 'On the Geological Structure of the North of Scotland,' Sir Roderick Murchison takes occasion to notice 'the great value of the Caithness flags as paving-stones; their extraordinary durability being due to a certain admixture of lime and bitumen—the latter derived from fossil fishes—with silica and alumina, while in some parts they contain bitumen enough to render them of economic value.' The region is interesting in another sense, on account of the numerous fossils and footsteps in sandstone slabs recently found there. One of the fossils, the *Stagonolepis*, is a remarkable reptile partaking of the character of the crocodile and lizard; yet, as Professor Huxley says, 'it widely diverges from all known and recent fossil forms, and throws no clear light on the age of the deposit in which it occurs.' It is, in fact, a higher order of reptile than those of the age to which it might be supposed to belong.

We mentioned some time ago the discovery in Cambridgeshire—in the fen country—of a large deposit of fossil coprolites which had been found valuable as manure. The discovery has been followed up, and with most unexpected results. The coprolites are imbedded in a vein of clay from three to six feet beneath the surface, and the vein itself has a thickness of from six inches to three feet, running down in places to deep pockets. The width of the vein is ascertained to be a quarter of a mile, and its length is supposed to be equal to that of the fen—fifty miles; when we consider that the contents per acre range from 150 to 200 tons, we can form an idea of the importance of these eastern counties diggings. Near Burwell, numerous diggers have been at work for months getting out the clay, and washing the fossils; and English agriculturists may soon supply themselves with a fertiliser which contains full 70 per cent. of phosphate of lime, without sending for it to the guano rocks of the Pacific Ocean. The owners of the land traversed by the vein of clay will doubtless make an enormous profit.

We conclude with a fact highly interesting to physiologists. M. L. Ollier of Lyon has discovered that, if a portion of the periosteum be taken from the surface of a living bone, and buried in the flesh of the back, hip, &c., it will grow into real bone, with a channel for marrow in the interior. The bone, moreover, will grow into any shape into which it may be bent when grafted into the flesh. It is thought that surgeons will be able to make this fact available in their cures of broken limbs.

CANDLEMAS-DAY.

THIS the appointed day on which we throw
Yule-berries in the flame;
While still the bleak wind breathes through blinding snow,
Cold as when Christmas came.

Colder, and far more dreary looks the world;
Graver our life within:
But see, the holly sprigs are dim and curled;
Let us our work begin!

Take down each leaf, each dusty withered spray;
And when the crackling pile
Hisses and flames, and startling burns away,
We can look on and smile.

And none shall know that in my heart goes on
The same sad work unseen:
Bright things were treasured there when Christmas shone,
And they seemed evergreen.

But oh! how soon they faded and they fell!
Pride kindles—and they die:
Die, happy dreams, unhonoured, for your knell
Is but a soft low sigh.

JUDITH.

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'YOU'RE WANTED, PLEASE.'

NOT so many weeks ago, there was a great occasion at the house of my friend, the Rev. Norton Folgate, of which I am an inmate. The new piano had come home, and there was quite a little domestic triumph got up in its honour. But, first and foremost, there was the casting forth ignominiously of that most perverse, cross-grained piece of furniture which did compound duty as side-table and musical instrument, which was always out of tune, sticking fast in, or ruthlessly cutting short the finish of all sorts of brilliant passages which demanded what Mrs Folgate generically termed 'additional keys.' This was the only concession I ever heard her make, for her faith in the piano had struck root years ago, and still flourished loyally; and sometimes, in the long evenings—after infinite persuasion, I allow—she would sit down and give us the *Bird Waltz* or the *Battle of Prague*, as much as to say, 'What more do you want?' Indeed, this latter piece was calculated to display some peculiarities of the instrument, for, although the 'running fire' and 'Go to bed, Tom,' were but shadowy, the 'cries of the wounded' assumed the most spectral character, coming from recesses of the instrument which were apparently in torture.

As long as ever I have known the Folgates, this piano has been a family topic. Whenever they had any one coming to the house, the tuner was put into requisition one hour before the guest's arrival, so as, at least, to start clear. Even on the occasion of confirmation, while we were in church, the renovating process was going forward; and did not my lord bishop, walking into luncheon, and talking 'parish' with Folgate, rub his apostolic skirts against little Schruster, caught retreating, and flattened respectfully against the outermost passage-wall of the parsonage?

We had at one time great confidence in an operation termed 'buffing;' but as nothing worth speaking of came of it, there was no help but to obey inevitable destiny, and get a new piano.

No reform is sudden; every reform is the expression of a progress which has grown. We had thus tended to the new piano for years; had gone into committee about it; carried the Upright and Grand controversy to the bounds of decency; made abstruse calculations, after supper, involving all Folgate's quarterly liabilities; referred all the musical instruments that came beneath our notice to this ideal; visited the whereabouts of wonderful advertisements, and collected secret intelligence from private sources; in fact, maintained it amongst us as a stock subject and speculation always ready on the shortest notice, although sometimes not ascending to the surface for months together.

For myself, individually, I confess it was not altogether by this time a pleasant topic, for I had so repeatedly taken my own friends into my confidences—had so employed them to negotiate—had been by them so known to have written hurried notes, and so detected despatching hasty messengers on climax of proceedings, that I had misgivings if the Folgates' new piano had not occasionally formed the nucleus of some jokes. I had, therefore, latterly taken things so quietly, that I was utterly unprepared for the invitational summons, the mention of which heads this article.

A noble instrument!—better than new!—with a certain air of the concert-room about it, that transformed the performer at once into 'a professional,' and the listeners into an audience of critical requirings. The case alone was worth the money. Such a grain!—such carving!—such a sweep! 'But stay till you hear it!' cries Norton, with almost apoplectic enthusiasm, 'and only cost'—— But let the confidences of friendship ever be sacredly inviolable. I am dumb with surprise, and forthwith hasten from the observatory of the hearth-rug to a nearer view, which must assuredly discover some rickety conditions of sale. No, it is truth itself—plain, simple, grand. Oh, happy fate! who had sat invisible, unmovable at the impatient rebellious family council-board. This was worth the years of waiting for. You would have said so, had you heard it; even so much as that flight of notes and crash of chords which Miss Julia favoured us with in her dashing off-hand manner, standing herself unmoved, for she is understood to be a consummate instrumentalist, and makes nothing of that sort of thing. Not so, however, my revered and reverend friend, whose bald head shines in the firelight one amalgamated organ of Benevolence, and whose eyes close over the musical transport, or the paternal emotion which has made them glisten strangely, and for which I honour him in my inmost heart. Never mind to-night, insurances or instalments; forget school-bills and shoemakers—away with butchers, bakers, and melancholy in general—above all, good friend, a truce to the siege daily laid to your kind heart by that grim poverty, which draws its cordon so inexorably around the narrow lanes and courts that hem in your modest parsonage! To-night will we be gay; will we draw down the blinds, and shut out the tall houses opposite, where the weaver's shuttle drones its dreary chant late into the night;

will we temper the fire, and kindle the lamp, and summon the shades of great maestros to bear us company.

It was certain that this night was marked in the festive calendar with a white stone; for, to cap the whole affair, that very morning a brace of pheasants had been sent to Folgate by those magnates, Ratcliff and Co., so that our whole social proceedings, even to the item of supper, were to assume a higher tone than ordinary; indeed, I had not been two minutes in the house, before this intelligence was conveyed to me with abrupt irrelevance by Tom Folgate, aged nine, and realised to my confused perceptions by being bodily introduced between him and his sister Meg, who raced with each other in friendly contention to display the prize. The attention was grateful to the last degree to poor Folgate, more particularly as it was lent zest to by Mrs Folgate's suggestion of 'what Mr Swithin would think if he knew;' for the Ratcliffs are in Mr Swithin's parish, and naturally enough, he would like to keep them to himself, if he could.

Now, whether it was the onerous demands of these birds from their preparatory 'pecking' to their consummatory bread-sauce, or whether it was that some portion of herself seemed to have been hearsed away with the tuneless departed, I know not; but certainly our dear Mrs Norton was the only one *distrait*, suspicious, unaffected by the popular exhilaration. She was coming and going purposelessly unsympathetic —the only criticism which passed her lips being in some sort an unfriendly one; a disparaging proposition to stand 'our new grand' on glasses to improve the tone! However, in having said this, I am disposed to think she considered she had sufficiently vindicated her allegiance to deposed excellence, and permitted herself presently to be led back to kindred interests by Norton, who, artful dog, protested that nobody should begin our concert after tea but mamma, by giving us *Cease your Funning*, with variations— 'which is worth any reverie in B flat ever written,' cries he, with the joyous air of having made a happy comparison. We were not long to-night in discussing tea, although the conversation took a highly musical turn, and Norton gave us several opera reminiscences of his gay days; of his having heard Madame Malibran and 'the Signor Lablache, who afterwards made such a figure in the world;' and of his being in the house when our own Braham sung the death of Nelson, and when sorrowing England, from pit to gallery, sobbed sad chorus to the mournful strain. While much of this chat had been going on, young John Folgate—who indulges in musical dilettantism, going to vocal classes, oratorios, and shilling concerts after office-hours—was mysteriously absent with a couple of the girls; but coming in presently, an official-looking paper, much be-flourished and emphasised with red ink, made the joke patent:

THE CELEBRATED FOLGATE FAMILY.

CONCERT-ROOMS, ST BONIFACE IN THE FIELDS.

Cease your Funning, with Variations, on one of Broadwood's grand pianos, with newest improvements, by desire, Mrs Folgate.
Sonata, Pathétique (L. V. Beethoven), Miss Folgate.
Song—*Let me wander not unseen* (Handel), Miss M. Folgate.
Grand Valse (Thalberg), Miss Folgate.
Glee—*Blow, Gentle Gales* (Bishop), Miss, Miss M., Mr J. Folgate.
The Bird Waltz, Mrs Folgate.
The Last Rose of Summer, in which the Rev. N. Folgate will display his celebrated accomplishment of whistling to accompaniment.
Duet—*I know a Bank,* in which Miss M. Folgate will support Mr Smith.
Trio of Angels, Miss, Miss M., Miss F. Folgate.
God Save the Queen, by the strength of the Company.

This was the programme of our entertainment, the only thing that underwent alteration being the position of the sacred song; for, as Norton is a stickler in these matters, he did not approve its coming after the secular ones, so it was transferred to the head of the list, coming immediately after the bit of Beethoven. I blush, however, to add, that our proceedings were delayed for a good hour by Mrs Folgate being obliged to absent herself on culinary business of the deepest importance, which accomplished, we proceeded in state to the drawing-room.

A night of it! I should think so. Our fire-light so bright, our lamp so cheery, our Sleeping Beauty still calmly reposing, awaiting the magic touch; even the bluster of the storm arising without, and the dash of the rain upon the windows, adding to our sense of enjoyment. Our opening piece was a decided success, although not amounting to an encore; and Norton, with quite an orchestral air—humouring the little comedy—led Mrs Folgate away; who now for the first time gave in her adherence to the treble, although maintaining a dignified reserve on the matter of the bass. As for the sonata, that was, of course, our crack performance, and an expression of profound intelligence dawned on every face as Julia rendered it; although I fear she could not have adopted John's reading, for, looking to the furthermost corner of the room, where he sat with folded arms, I saw that he several times knit his brows ominously. Public opinion, however, was unequivocally favourable, and the girls fell into order for their trio, only interrupted by Norton detecting some stray speck of dust on one of Beauty's legs, and hastening to remove it with his silk pocket-handkerchief. Indeed, he seemed to express his approval by a sly polish, as you would pat a dog's head or a horse's neck after a success.

At this stage of the proceedings there came to the hall-door a knock, single it is true, but sharp, quick, and imperative; after a short parley, the servant entered, in a cloud of ambrosial fragrance, it seemed from the delicious gush of supper, rich, savoury, mellow, which attended her into the drawing-room. 'You're wanted, please, sir,' said she to Folgate, who thereupon replied more abruptly than is his wont: 'Who is it?' to which Ann: 'A woman, sir.' A woman, at such an hour, in driving wind and beating rain. She was synonymous of disturbance, of trouble—an irresolvable discord in our harmony. 'I can't see any one at this time of night,' says Folgate, turning his back on the question altogether, and with, I am bound to confess, the organ of Benevolence not altogether so prominent as usual: 'tell her to come in the morning,' with which exit Ann; but hastily, with troubled countenance, returns to say: 'It is a dying man, sir, and he have the rattles, and can't fetch his breath.'

My Folgate incases himself in an impenetrable armour of obdurate determination, condescends to put it as an argument, 'Well, why didn't they send at a proper time?'—condescends to put it as an apology, 'They never do send till they're insensible; tell her to leave the address, and I'll come in the morning.' So once more, with unsatisfied air, exit Ann. But surely the organ of Benevolence is again becoming visible; just the edge, as the momentary eclipse is passing away, and Folgate, in a lower tone, says to his son: 'Go down, Tom, and see what it is.' Then we are silent, and Norton gazes moodily into the fire. From the passage ascends the woman's voice, her very tone an impassioned appeal. 'O papa,' cries Tom, bursting in, 'it's that young drayman, the big fellow with the red cheeks from the country that lives in the Buildings, and he's got the death-sweats, and he's fighting for breath like anything; and she's sure he'll go off to-night, and she's going for the doctor.'

The eclipse was over; my Folgate was himself again, not as he was, half an hour since, with that unusual felicity joyously crowning him as he sat amongst his children sharing their happiness; but, as he ordinarily is, anxious, somewhat apart with his cares, but full of human sympathies and answering compassions. He rose at once, and again the woman told her shrill story to a kind ear. 'Don't mind me, girls,' said he, returning with a faint attempt at cheerfulness; 'I don't know how long I may be. I want some wine, my dear, at once.'

'Port or sherry?' asks good Mrs Folgate, diving for her keys.

'Tent,' he replies; and we all understand, without further comment, the significance of the word.

After the door closed behind my friend, shutting him out into the wild night, we all sat very moodily, and a little awkwardly, as if somehow we were ashamed of each other; but the silence being broken by a *sotto-voce* titter from Tom and Meg, whose vitality, arising out of the coming supper, nothing could quench, John Folgate took advantage of the break to propose that we should go on with our concert, and resume our interrupted trio.

'Watchman, what of the night? Behold the morning cometh.' How beautifully the young fresh voices sang, as it were, one of their own songs in a strange land, with a sort of hush at first, and a little trembling compassion, such as shining messengers might feel, but presently rising into that long, high, glorious note, held on triumphantly—a heavenly music beyond words. At least this is as it should be performed, but, as I am obliged to add, as it was not; for, arrived at this very point, having carried it to a certain length, my darling Mary's voice began to betray tokens of uncertainty. The swell swayed a little, faltered, grew strangely husky, passed into something like a sob, and then—Shall I go on? No! Our concert was over. Linked by our absent friend to that dark chamber of sorrow, where greatest earthly mysteries were being enacted, our very breath in its gaily wanton expenditure seemed to tax us with a distant cruelty to the poor struggler for the breath of life.

This little homely incident happened, as I think I mentioned, within the last few weeks, so that it still has for me a freshness of detail, which a thousand other circumstances, bearing on my remark, have possessed in immensely greater proportion, only now all shrivelled and edge-chipped by hardening of time, and attrition of daily life. So this must plead my excuse for according to it somewhat undeserved prominence. But I remember: I havn't made my remark yet, although about to do it ever so far back—indeed, quite full of its truth all the way through—I may say finding it a notable truth all the thinking-days of my life.

Bless you! when that woman came in with her 'You 're wanted, please,' I for one knew she might just as well have said: 'Shut up your music, and put out your lights; the evening is over.' Did I think it was a message from the bishop telling Folgate that the living of St Fortunatus had fallen in, and begging his acceptance of it? Did it occur to me that Mrs Folgate's rich aunt in the country had been called to her fathers, and that the executor waited with golden tidings in the hall? Did even a renewal of the pheasant courtesies cross my field of vision? No, my friends! I had too often noted how this phrase, like to a tragic title-page, foretold the nature of the volume from death to taxes; had noted it from my earliest years, from the time when I was but a small child in a distant school—gloomy, fireless, chilblainy—a sort of Giant Despair Castle, of which our master was despot, with all the ushers for inexorable turnkeys. But there were Delectable Mountains, with the sun upon their summits, still shining on the retina of memory, to which I should escape one of these days; with superfluity of upholstery, with fires everywhere, to scare away that ravening wild beast of cold, that specially gnawed my young bones; with things good to eat, with all the wonderful things—the parrot, and the cocoa-nuts, and the great jars of ginger and tamarinds—my father was to bring home from his travels. I used to take my fill out of the glorious vision in playtime; I used to go over it bit by bit at church, in sermon-time, and put together the home-picture like a puzzle every night and morning at prayers; I used to wander away into it as into a fairy rose-garden from the crushing realities of outer-life—Mavor and the multiplication-tables. Even under the periodical infliction of the Saturday-night tub, I was sustained by the beautiful hope. I was always ready, my private possessions neatly tied up in a brown-paper parcel, so as to be off like a flash. I was always expecting my father's return, and to be sent for. Had I not the promise?

Looking out over my Delectable Mountains one black November afternoon, from under the leafless branches where the wind was moaning, and seeing them somewhat distant, and in a golden mist, by reason of my eyes, which were watery with such long and steadfast gaze, there came a summons—I hear it to-day, perhaps more plainly than in that biting twilight, shouted out by the boys: 'Smith junior, you're wanted!' Never mind the chilblains!—never mind the *impedimenta* of the big shawl which tied up my blue arms! I flew. Was it not my home standing beyond with outstretched hands? Alas, no! Only Giant Despair waiting to devour me, although he was kind enough to present me with an Abernethy before he fell to work; from which unusual passage I argued no good, for already by instinct I knew no one was ever wanted for that sort of thing. 'I am sorry to tell you bad news, Benjamin,' said he, calling me by my Christian name—after all, he was but a pasteboard giant, speaking gruffly by reason of his mask—'you must be a good boy, and not cry, my dear. I am sorry to tell you your poor papa is taken from you: he is dead, Benjamin.'

Since that day, lustres ago, I have never heard the words, 'You're wanted,' without recognising in the speaker the accredited messenger of Nemesis; on one occasion, and one only, as well as I can tax my memory, my prophetic soul failing in its instincts; but as this is an incomplete instance, never explained, nor ever likely to be, perhaps the exception goes for nothing. All that I know of it is this: I was spending the evening at a friend's house some years back—a winter's night, with the snow lying thick upon the ground, and drifting before the cutting wind, as I remember. I know it must have been late, for I was beginning to dread the turning out into the cold and darkness from the comfortable room with its genial light and warmth; had begun to talk shiveringly of it, too, standing up close to the fire, as is people's fashion before they go out to face the night. Thus in noisy conversation, we scarcely noticed the servant who came to tell her master he was wanted. 'What for?' said the lady of the house, for there had been no knock or ring to indicate that the requirement was from without. The girl said that 'a young gentleman was in the hall, wanting to see Mr ——; she did not know who he was, but he was dressed like a sailor.' My friend's youngest son was a midshipman, about this time, as they supposed, cruising in the Mediterranean; so some letter or tidings from him suggested itself at once. He rose hastily and went down stairs, some of the family following him to the door, to catch a sound of the news. But we waited in vain for some time, hearing nothing but the opening and shutting of doors, then the calling for the servant. At last my friend returned with a puzzled air. He had gone into the hall, into the dining-room, into the study, without seeing any one, had opened the door, and looked up and down the street, but no one was there. The maid was had up again, and examined. She had not much to add. 'She was in the kitchen sewing, when she heard the knock. It was a young gentleman, as she had said, with a gold band round his cap; not a boy—a young gentleman; and she noticed he had fair curly hair, something like Miss Eleanor's. Well, she couldn't be positive he had asked for her master, but she thought he had, and she was quite certain she had left him standing in the hall when she came up.' The description, so far as it went, answered so exactly to my friend's son, that we now felt sure it must be himself, although unexpected; and that, with a youngster's love of frolic, he had hidden himself somewhere in the house. So again a search, even calling him by name; not a room, not a cupboard, not a curtain left unransacked. It was impossible he could be in the house; he must have slipped out. Going to the door to look, some one called attention to the snow lying heaped up there. It was one smooth undisturbed surface. Since that had fallen, to a moral certainty, no foot had stood upon it. Besides, no one had heard the knock. The girl's story in itself was improbable, and, taken in conjunction with circumstantial evidence, impossible; but what her motive could have been in telling it, no one could conjecture. She had not been sufficiently long in the family to have had any confidence already established in her, and the whole statement was treated as pure fabrication, although she persisted in its truth, even with tears. So passed the circumstance, scarcely recalled till months after, when there came home news of the young man. It had been his watch one dark night, and he had been seen by several, only remaining unaccounted for about half an hour; at the end of that time, was missed—sought for—never found. The ship was running before the wind, which was stiff, and it was presumed he must have fallen overboard. One forecastle hand had thought he heard a cry, but supposed 'it was only some of the young gentlemen larking.' That was all ever learned of the poor fellow; and, allowing for difference of time, the accident must have happened at the very hour of the mysterious visit. Now, this may be only strange coincidence—more extraordinary ones have been unravelled before now—but occasioning so distressful an impression on my friends as to produce the perfect silence on the subject, which is the culminating-point of pain, and, for myself, helping out, in its own uncomfortable manner, the remark I am dealing with.

But I have so many instances to help it out that the difficulty lies in the selection—of scenes in which I have been but an onlooker; as at a yacht-match—champagne and pigeon-pies at the meridian—when the message came down the cabin-stairs to a splendid fellow, who had been the envy and admiration of us all. He sent down word presently to beg some one would take the vacant chair, as his mother was ill; but did we not catch a glimpse of him, through the port-hole, going ashore, sitting in the boat, with a white face, beside Justice in plain clothes? Or, as in the case of a handsome clergyman, doing Folgate's occasional duty, who, so surely as he yielded to temptation, and stepped in after service, was always wanted by some one who wouldn't come in, but would wait outside. It was invariably a street-boy who delivered the message at the door, so that we had no clue to the mystery but through the pew-opener, who, coming in from the church with the robes and keys, used to encounter a little old woman, in a black bonnet, and with an umbrella, hovering about the parsonage, who used to bear him off triumphantly. Or, as in my own case, when hastening home to dress to accompany my adorable Georgiana to the pit of Her Majesty's, I found that I was waited for and wanted by an individual in the parlour, who handed me a slip of paper headed 'Victoria greeting,' and acquainting me that my appearance was particularly requested at Westminster, &c., &c. The half-crown which I presented him with on the occasion I have never ceased to remember. Or, as in the instance of a lawyer of my acquaintance—— But, halt! Every one has ample stock of such experiences—not, perhaps, of the precise character of the foregoing, but, at least, referring to practical repetitions of everyday-life. For, who does not know at the dinner-party, when, before the serving-up, the lady is summoned from her drawing-room circle, that it is to receive tidings of some frightful catastrophe to the fish or the kitchen-chimney? Who has not been sent for into the hall to find a seedy man, buttoned up to the chin, with determined purpose in his eye, and packets of polishing-paste or bottles of marking-ink? Breathes there a man who has not been now and again wanted down stairs to face inflexible trades-people with accounts to make up by Saturday? Even on the wide lone sea, where only the winds come and go, do they not bear the mysterious message, and do we not know that all 's not well when the captain is wanted above?

Going to the window of the room in which I write but a few moments since, and seeing the closed blinds in the house of my long-sick neighbour opposite, I could but think of the hour in which I too should be wanted, and for the last time. No, not the last! for, as I looked, I saw two dark visitors to him, bearing a solemn burden—could trace them being lighted slowly up through the darkened house—could trace their busy shadows on the blinds.

OUR CRIMINAL CLASSES.

It is an old and trite saying, that 'half the world knows not how the other half lives;' but, like many other saws, so familiar that it is almost an impertinence to quote them, it contains a great deal more of latent truth and wisdom than meets the ear of those who hear it, or touches the sense of those who quote it. We will not pretend to enter at present into more than one of its manifold meanings. But it may be interesting to many of our readers to be reminded of its reference to the habits and condition of a class whose numbers and importance are known to few, except those who have given special attention to the subject. Were it not that unseen dangers are easily neglected, and not seldom disbelieved, it would seem strange that any should be unaware of or indifferent to the presence among us of a large and distinct body of persons who are by habit and profession enemies of society; engaged in ceaseless war with the community in the midst of which they dwell; against whom an internal army of more than twenty thousand men is constantly kept on foot, and who, in one way or another, cost the public revenue more than L.1,000,000 annually; to say nothing of the loss and damage inflicted on individuals by their predatory incursions on their neighbours. Certainly, however, more than 'half the world' have very little idea how lives and works among them that host of intestine foes who are described in the aggregate as our Criminal Classes. They imagine that the prisoners who appear at the bar of our tribunals, from those of the Scotch sheriff or the English stipendiary magistrate, up to the Central Criminal Court itself, are individual members of the ordinary working-body of society, whom idleness, or want, or vicious habits have led into guilt; and that most of whom will, perhaps, after suffering the punishment assigned to their offence by law, be reabsorbed into the mass of the population, and lost to the eye of the police. They may be confirmed in this opinion by observing that the number of second convictions recorded in the statistical tables which are annually compiled, form but a small proportion of the total; and still more by observing how very few of the sentences passed are of that severe description which is alone just or reasonable, in the case of the notorious and habitual plunderer of his neighbours. Even of the latter, not a few of us probably conceive as of a man engaged like other men in some daily avocation, and only less able or less willing than his neighbours to resist the temptations to sin which fall in his way. It is no doubt to some such ideas as these that we owe the excess of sympathy which induces good and wise men too often to speak of and to deal with criminals as with persons afflicted with some disease of conscience, or mental malformation; who should be placed in a prison as in a kind of moral hospital, and regarded by their happier brethren in a spirit of pure charity and compassion. If they were told that an enormous proportion of the crimes committed are the acts of men with whom crime is as much a profession as is law with the advocate, or medicine with the physician; and that of the remainder, the great majority are perpetrated by persons who, in the phrase we have heard employed by a policeman, 'work a little, and steal a great deal;' they might perhaps be inclined to take a different view of the matter.

That such is really the case, is certain. The experience of officers of police has well established that a very large proportion of the number apprehended in a year for crimes against property—for larceny, burglary, highway robbery, and the like—are persons either having no other profession or occupation than that of plunder, or who combine with the pursuit of thieving some other and less profitable employment, often affording them special opportunities for the exercise of their more lucrative talent, and who steal both while employed, and in the intervals when they are out of work. We may fairly estimate these two classes to furnish one-half of the number apprehended for any of the various kinds of theft. The other half will then consist of persons habitually honest, who, from weakness of principle, or from force of temptation, have been misled into isolated acts of guilt, and who are often, and, we believe, generally, detected in their first or second offence. The number of these 'casual offenders' apprehended will probably not fall very far short of the total number of offences committed by persons of this class; but if we suppose them to be on an average detected only in the second offence, we have for every hundred apprehensions among this class of culprits only two hundred crimes. But in the class of habitual pilferers, and still more certainly among the higher order of professional thieves, every apprehension may be taken to represent at least thirty offences; and every hundred apprehensions will represent about 3000 separate thefts. For every two hundred arrests for theft, then, we may calculate that 200 crimes have been committed by casual, and 3000 by habitual offenders; or, out of every 3200 such offences, 3000, or fifteen-sixteenths, are perpetrated by persons constantly, wilfully, and deliberately persisting in the practice of dishonesty. By far the largest number of serious breaches of the law fall under the head of crimes against property; so that, if we take nine-tenths of the total number of crimes committed to be the work of habitual criminals, we shall certainly be guilty of no exaggeration.

All offenders against the law, then, and especially offenders against the law of property, who form an overwhelming proportion of the inmates of our prisons—as robbers, burglars, forgers, or thieves—may be divided into three classes, under the respective denominations of professional, habitual, and casual offenders. The first constitutes a body perhaps not exceedingly numerous in comparison with the others, but far more dangerous to society and mischievous to individuals than either. The professional thieves are those who follow no other ostensible calling—who live solely, and we might almost say avowedly, by pilfering, or defrauding their neighbours. They are a class or trade altogether apart from the rest of the community. They have their own dwellings generally in quarters where few honest people are to be found; they associate principally or solely with one another; they have, like men in other occupations, their own houses of call, their own instruments and tools, their own rules and 'maxims of the trade,' their own organisation and division of labour; nay, though in this they are less exclusive, their especial recreations and amusements, wherein the ill-gotten gains of their profession are squandered as lightly as they are earned. There are, in all large towns, certain neighbourhoods which are their head-quarters, and to which they resort from all the various regions round about, where they may have been carrying on their operations. These streets are narrow, dingy, and most unpleasant to traverse; the houses are tall, rickety in construction, and unsafe in appearance; the windows glazed with coarse green glass; and when that is broken, in a row, or by some drunken passer-by, the place is filled with the first dirty piece of cotton rag that comes conveniently to hand. In many of these streets every other dwelling is a low beer-house, whose upper rooms serve the purpose of a lodging-house, and are filled with closely packed beds of most uninviting aspect. Above, all is dirt, darkness, and squalor; below, at the time when these places are most crowded, there prevails an uncomfortable, cheerless, riotous gaiety; the inmates of these hovels assembling round a dirty table, on a floor innocent of washing since first it received the contributions of beer-dregs and tobacco-juice, which are every evening augmented. Here the plunder of the congregated thieves is spent in the coarsest kind of dissipation; in drinking beer, or, less often, gin and brandy, in the lowest condition of adulteration; in gambling with filthy dominoes, or filthier cards; or in other amusements of a nature still more coarse and criminal. But if there be one feature which is common alike to the men and their dwellings, it is the all-pervading appearance of comfortless squalor which distinguishes them, above the very worst of the orders from which this class of thieves chiefly come. Honest labourers, even when very poor, would shrink from the utter wretchedness of these miserable abodes. Yet, for the sake of the dissipations which they here enjoy, these professional thieves choose a life of dishonesty, with the constant prospect of severe legal punishment before their eyes, rather than earn their bread by honest industry. True, they have meat every day, and a quantity of drink, in which the honest man can happily but seldom find leisure, even if he have money, to indulge. But they have neither home nor wife; they can never enjoy security even for an hour; and cleanliness and comfort are absolutely beyond their reach. Probably the great attraction of this kind of life is the wild freedom which they enjoy, and the absence of hard and persevering labour. For though such robberies as that achieved by Agar on the South-eastern Railway require much ingenuity, patience, and skill, they do not call for a tenth part of the steady hard work that would be required to make a living in a respectable calling. The thief chooses his own time of rising and of going to rest; his own hours of work, and his intervals of laziness; he is under no necessity of regular attendance in mill, or foundry, or warehouse; he roams whither he will, and returns when he pleases. If he be disposed to indolence, he can spend the day in listlessness, and the night in debauchery, without fear of fine or dismissal from an indignant employer. A few days spent in a career of successful crime may furnish him with the means of enjoying, for weeks, unlimited riot in the luxuries he best understands—drink and idleness. When his purse is exhausted, he sallies forth again in search of fresh plunder. All this time, his character, his habits, and his person are perfectly well known to the police. They will enter his haunts, and speak to him as to one notoriously engaged in the trade of thieving; and he will not attempt to deny it. They can point him out in the street, and say: 'That man is a thief; he is now out on such and such a track; he is going to see what he can get at this crowded meeting, or at that fashionable assembly.' Or they may see him take his seat in the train that starts for a neighbouring town on the day of some attractive fête, and be perfectly well aware of his errand. In a day or two, he returns with the fruits of his expedition, and spends them merrily under the eye of the guardians of the law, who have no hold upon him. Such a life has no doubt great attractions for the thoroughly idle and habitually dissolute, while youth and vigour remain. In advancing age, we should expect to find it less obstinately adhered to, its charms diminished, and its inconveniences more keenly felt; and this accords with the fact, which we know from statistical evidence, that a vast majority of the total number of prisoners committed annually are under thirty years of age, and that only about one-sixth are more than forty. The professional thief chooses, indeed, 'a short life and a merry one;' and generally, according to the evidence of men well qualified to judge by long knowledge of this class, closes it at an early age by a wretched death on his dingy bed, amid the riot and debauchery in which he can no longer take a share. But it cannot be supposed that death is the only agent which cuts short the career of the majority of criminals before they have reached forty years of age. The disproportionately small number who pass that period must be attributed, at least in part, to a change of life in those who find themselves no longer fitted by physical power or mental vigour for the risks and activity of their previous career. Drink, dissipation, and squalid discomfort have told upon a frame probably diseased from birth, inherited from vicious and dissipated parents, and educated in the hardships of the streets by day, and of the lodging-house by night, till the young thief was able to provide for himself at the expense of society. So the broken-down robber turns either to some easier branch of his own trade—as to the stay-at-home and comparatively safe business of the 'resetter' or receiver of stolen goods—or finds some occupation which, compared to his former one, may be called honest. The cases of genuine reformation of men of this class, when left to themselves, are few indeed. The besetting temptation of drink, to which they have been for a lifetime accustomed; the habit of idleness, which they have never learned to overcome; the irreparable loss of character, which renders it almost impossible to find employment that will afford an honest livelihood—all these difficulties stand in their way, and oppose at every point their approach to the path of rectitude.

Besides this class, whose only occupation is the plunder of their neighbours, there is a much larger body who may be described as thieves by habit and repute, but who are nevertheless in employment more or less regular, and who depend in some degree upon their labour for subsistence. They comprise the numerous class of dishonest work-people, disreputable hawkers, and others; many of them work in factories, and others as porters, or in occupations generally of a somewhat irregular and uncertain character. Many of them work while trade is good, and steal when it becomes slack, and when they—as the hands with whom the master will most willingly part—are thrown out of employment. Others purloin small articles or stores from their place of work; iron from the foundry, cloth from the warehouse, cotton from the factory. They seldom reach such a post of trust as would give them a chance of robbing the till, or embezzling the moneys of their employer. The small shopkeepers suffer severely from the petty depredations of this class, especially as, being in work, and known to their neighbours merely as working-people, it may be some time before they become marked as suspected characters. They have no particular quarter of their own, like the first class of thieves, but are scattered, in the poorest neighbourhoods especially, among struggling and industrious families. They are less accurately known to the police than their professional brethren in guilt; but their operations are on a much smaller scale, their skill greatly inferior, and their detections, we are inclined to believe, proportionally more frequent. In idleness, profligacy, and absolute want of any shame in their evil trade, they differ little from the former class; lacking the same opportunities for the indulgence of vice, rather than the same depravity of character. There may be more hope of their reformation, inasmuch as they have found less enjoyment in a career of crime; but the effect of punishment or of exhortation upon them is seldom great, and cures are far from frequent.

It is not so, we would hope, with the third class; those whom strong temptation or momentary weakness have led into sins opposed to the whole habits and feelings of their lives. The clerk, born of honest parents, and brought up a respectable man, who has appropriated money which he intended to replace in time, and cannot; the servant-girl, whose father's gray hairs are bowed to the dust by shame, when he learns that his darling has bought some coveted ribbon with the sovereign which her master's criminal carelessness left loose on his dressing-table; the lad who has snatched a penny-whistle hung temptingly outside the door of a toyshop; the child who has purloined a bun from a baker's shop to satisfy the cravings of hunger—who can doubt that these may be, and should be, saved from deeper sinking into the mire? These are not of the criminal class; these are not enemies of society by choice, but by circumstances. For these, we need a discipline which may serve as warning and example, without inflicting degradation or urging to despair; against those whose life is that of the beast of prey, the sons of Ishmael whose hand is against every man, we need stringent barriers and stern coercion; not forgetting the while, however, that even among these are many, very many, 'more sinned against than sinning;' and that it belongs not to us to administer retribution for sin, but merely to protect ourselves and them against the probability of their return to a life of depredation, and against the continual recruitment of the ranks of this army of crime, engaged perpetually in an intestine warfare with the community.

NESTOR HALL.

He is no Somersetshire-man—I had almost said no Briton—who has not heard of Nestor Hall and the Mountesdils. It is my belief, and the belief of all Nestorton village, that very soon after the subsidence of the waters of the Deluge and the abandonment of the Ark, the Hall began to be built by one of that ancient race. There were doubtless many generations of the family in antediluvian times, but we will suppose, in order to preclude uncheerful genealogical argument, that after the Flood it was commenced again, and that Japhet Mountesdil was practically the founder of the family. Having his weather-eye open, doubtless, after recent experiences, he laid the foundations of his mansion upon a very lofty hill, with great quantities of oak-wood about it, especially serviceable for rafts.

In Nestor Park still stand these immemorial trees, many single trunks of which—scarred with the rough usage of a thousand winters, and curiously affected, as by some old-world disease, with bulbous excrescences and writhings of super-timberal agony—our village-maidens, seven and eight together, linking their outstretched hands, can scarce ring round. What circles of summer shade they make for us still, for Age to rest under and Youth to revel; and yet not shade, so much as mellowed sunlight, with a pattern of branch and leaf upon the grassy carpet such as never art portrayed. From the windows of the dining-room of Nestor Hall—and, humble parish-clerk and sexton as I am, I have looked forth from them more than once upon occasions of general festivity—half the country is seen lying beneath like an open scroll—town and village, wood and river, and in the distance, between the farthest hills, a long dim misty line, which is the sea. Though that is scores of miles away, so that I have never been by its shore in all my life, from the Turret top I have seen through a spy-glass many a ship, and once the peak of a terrible mountain that is even across the sea, they say, and in Wales. It has always seemed to me as though the whole landscape was presided over by Nestor Hall, and formed but the territory and kingdom of its ancient lords the Mountesdils.

They were indeed, even within my own memory, a race but little short of kings in power and station. The old man, Geoffrey Mountesdil, *was* a king, in pride. I see him now, erect, on-looking, fierce, as though he anticipated some cross or opposition (when, goodness knows, he had all things his own way enough), stalking into church as though he complimented the place by his presence; or poking the fire in his grand old family pew, just before the sermon, and preparatory to going off to sleep, like a fine old gentleman of the olden time, as he was, and after the comfortable custom of his endless line of ancestors. Some are born to work, and some to enjoy themselves, and so it must always be; but I confess that in my too conspicuous box, beneath old Mr Humdrum, and in a July afternoon, maybe, when I have had my dinner, I have felt a little envious, and desirous of altering my station in life, at least for an hour or two, more than once or twice. Had you chanced to call the Squire Mr Mountesdil, he would very likely have knocked you down: the way to pronounce that time-hallowed name was Mosedale, and woe was to that wight who took it into his mouth from the mere spelling.

When I first came to Nestorton, the old gentleman had been a widower some years; but his two sons, Ernest and Beauchamp, and his only daughter, Eleanor, dwelt with him at the Hall. I know not which was the proudest of the four, but in those days I used to think that it was Miss Eleanor. Had she been less than she was—other than the haughty high-born beauty which she was acknowledged to be—she would have been counted downright uncanny and eery, she had such terrible blighting looks at times, and such beautiful evil eyes. She was open-handed, indeed, like the rest of her race; but there was as little kindness in the manner of her gifts as gifts could have. Ernest was the masculine double of her, unforgiving, cruel upon the bench of justices, and exacting, in return for a generosity, submission and slavishness enough. Beauchamp was the least rigid, although the most passionate of the four, and was, with us, perhaps the least unpopular.

In spite of what I have said against the Mountesdils, they did no little good among us, in their unpleasant way. Poor men—not such as we, but those who may be in reality poorer, since they are something like gentle folks themselves—authors, musicians, and, in particular, painter-artists, often had a helping-hand stretched out to them by old Geoffrey and his sons. I have known as many as half-a-dozen of this sort of folk staying at the Hall together at one time; eating and drinking of the best, and driving and riding the squire's horses for all the world as though they were their own. The painters came in my way more than the others, because of my office, for the church was old and ramshackly, with ivy and rubbish about the big gray tower—which afterwards brought it down, by the by, as I expected—and altogether such a building as delight your artists, who seem to care most for places that are become ruinous and dangerous to other people. 'Gabriel Grubb, Gabriel Grubb,' they would sing out at my cottage door—although my name is not Grubb, nor anything like it—'give us thy keys, sweet grumbler.' They were a mad lot, and therefore I did not take much count of them, although I must say that they paid their footing handsomely enough, and so deserved, poor devils, to be richer. One Mr Miles Daynton, in particular, used to pay me like a prince. It was the inside of the church which he was engaged on, the sculptures, and the carvings, and such like; and very beautifully indeed he painted them, but, as it seemed, even to me, exceeding slowly. 'Let me be left alone,' he used to say; 'let no one disturb me at my work, and here is a crown for you.'

About a score of years ago—in the June of 1838 or so, or it may be a year later—he had come for the keys one day, as he had done many days before, and was inside the building, when I had occasion to fetch from the vestry the surplice of a neighbouring clergyman, who, having preached at Nestorton the preceding Sunday, had left it there, and sent his servant over for it that morning. The great door was locked on the inside, as I had expected; so, not wishing to disturb Mr Daynton, I dropped into the ante-chapel through a little window that chanced to be open, and thence intended to get what I came for from its place, without being noticed. On my way under the north gallery to the vestry, however, I was surprised to hear voices in conversation, and when, unseen myself, I became a witness as well as a hearer, my astonishment became absolute terror.

Miss Eleanor, the haughty beauty, the contemptuous queen, was Mr Daynton's companion, and, as I learned from her own lips, the painter's betrothed bride. That they had met there alone, and secretly, many times before, was certain enough, but it was reserved for me to hear that day, with my hair on end, their open confession of love. I shall not forget, so long as I live, either the scene or the words. He was drawing from the great Mountesdil window over the southern nave, or he had at least his easel and painting utensils opposite to it. His handsome face and soft womanly eyes were in shadow, but upon Miss Eleanor's brow and cheek the mid-day sun streamed full, and bathed them with the glowing colours from the armorial panes. Even in that very spot, within reach of her great-grandfather's—Sir Montacute's—marble hand, if he had but stretched it forth from his monument (and I almost wonder that he did not) in warning to the degenerate girl—with the very life-blood of her line, as it seemed, mantling upon her cheeks—she plighted faith with the young painter. His Art and his Love combined together as he looked upon her transcendent beauty, to make him swear that with that crown of splendour upon her forehead, she was a very queen, and he her loyalest subject; that, with that halo of glory round her, she was a Saint, and he her Devotee for ever. And she, instead of withering him with her ancestral eyes, or crying for her grooms to whip the madman from her imperial presence, fell fairly into his arms at once, just as my own poor Molly did, five-and-forty years ago! I waited to see no more, and was sorry enough for my own sake that I had seen what I had. Should it ever come to be known that I had been privy to this without revealing it, the Mountesdils were not the men, as I believed, even to stick at the murdering of me. It was probable, on the other hand, that I should not be suffered to survive the telling of it; insomuch as the first whisper of such a disgrace having occurred to one of their family would be sure to rouse in any one of them a perfect whirlwind of fury. And then, to betray the generous young fellow Daynton—seeing that I would as soon rob a tigress of her feline admirer as cross Miss Eleanor in such a matter—why, that was not to be thought of either. So I kept my own counsel, and waited to see what would come of such a love-affair with curiosity enough. One week afterwards, upon a beautiful summer night, Mr Daynton and Miss Eleanor eloped from Nestor Hall without a soul in it being any the wiser until the next morning. She left a letter behind her for her father, not entreating his forgiveness (she knew him too well for that), not asking anything of his love and tenderness, nor appealing to her brothers for their good offices, but simply stating that she was determined to marry the young painter, and, anticipating opposition, that she had therefore done so clandestinely.

Oh, proud as the men were, the woman, to my thinking, in this very matter, proved herself far prouder. Let her marry whom she might, thought she, that man would straightway become ennobled by her alliance, not she degraded by his. She could not picture herself filling any position other than that to which she had been accustomed. She had no idea but that the once-mistress of Nestor Hall could ever meet with aught but the utmost subjection and respect from all the world. Old Geoffrey knew far otherwise, for he had known the world; but if he thought of what suffering must needs be before her, it was the sole reflection which gave him any consolation now. He absolutely hated his daughter. His fury was such when he heard of her flight, that it brought on a stroke, and he lay for hours speechless, and striving in vain with his paralysed tongue to utter curses upon her.

He and his sons, they say, took a solemn oath together, that they would never hold communication with her, or hers, as long as they lived. Mr Ernest came up that very day to my cottage (terrifying me thereby to the last degree, since I made sure my secret was discovered), and bade me bring him the register, which I did not dare refuse to do; and with his own hand he erased his sister's name from the register, as if he would have made it as though she had never been born. His brother and himself, and the old squire as soon as he was well enough, were seen in the county everywhere in public above their wont, as though they strove to brave the matter out, and prove that they were heart-whole and above disgrace.

We did not hear anything of Mr or Mrs Daynton for nearly a year, when some of us read in the papers that she had born a son; and very soon afterwards the postman said that he had taken a letter in her handwriting to the Hall, addressed to the old squire. Had the girl, then, forgotten what sort of man her father was in that little time? or had poverty bowed her lofty spirit so low, and so changed her haughty nature already, that she thus courted insult and invited contempt? She forgot not, neither was she changed; but the mother had stooped to implore that for her child, which she would have died rather than demand for herself or her husband. My son is of the Mountesdil blood, she argued; his grandfather and uncles will not suffer him at least to be nipped by this cold poverty in his youth. Would they not? If she could but have seen the old man's smile when he took that letter, and—knowing what it was about as well as though he had read it—placed it unopened in an envelope, bidding his steward direct it back to her, she would have felt that he would indeed though, and that gladly. The Dayntons were very, very poor. Miss Eleanor, that was, had not a shilling in her own right, and her husband's trade was not a thriving one. Presently, a little daughter came to them, delicate, fragile as a flower, and another letter arrived at Nestor Hall—to be returned. The third and last came soon afterwards, black-edged, and addressed in a somewhat trembling hand, to tell that she was a widow, and the cause of offence—she went to the length of writing *that*—was now removed; but when this letter came back to her like the rest, she folded her sick child in her arms, and, with her almost baby-boy beside her, set forth upon her bitter life-journey, unaided, friendless, and with the memory of prosperous days to mock her.

About this time the Mountesdils of Nestor Hall began to thin. The old man died without repenting him of his wrath, unforgiving, and not so much as mentioning his banished daughter, or her offspring, in his will. Soon afterwards, Ernest died also of a strange complaint, the name and nature of which I am unacquainted with; only, because so many of the race have died of it, it is called among us the Mountesdil fever. It is said that on his death-bed, he adjured his brother Beauchamp to see that the old Hall and great estate should not pass after him, by any means, into Daynton hands; and Beauchamp, as though dreading to die, like Ernest, early and without an heir, married almost at once. His bride, though fitting enough in respect of birth and station, was one of sixteen children, and by no means wealthy. She had been the pet of her family, and when the young proprietor of Nestor Hall had come a wooing, was permitted to draw that excellent prize out of the matrimonial lottery without any domestic rivalry. Despite her seeming success, however, the young Mrs Mountesdil found herself, they say, very far from happily matched. Her lord and master was imperious at all times, and tender only by fits. His disappointment at neither heir nor heiress making their appearance, so soon as had been sanguinely calculated upon, would have been ludicrous in a meaner person. The thought that his young nephew, Theodore Daynton, was already looked upon as heir-presumptive to the entail, drove him half-wild with fury, and made very many persons, who were certainly in no way to be blamed in the matter, exceedingly uncomfortable.

What would have been mere vulgar ill-temper in a person of the middle class, was of course but a strong proof of 'force of character' and 'impatience of circumstances' in a Mountesdil; but we at Nestorton were certainly not displeased when Mr Beauchamp took himself off, along with his unfortunate lady, to his estate in Ireland. In a little afterwards, we had news of her having given birth to a daughter; but the family did not visit us again until the summer before last. Miss Gertrude, then a girl upon the brink of womanhood, was supremely fair: fairer than her mother, whose beauty, indeed, was failing lamentably; fairer than her aunt Eleanor—whom nobody had heard of for about fifteen years—and yet not half so fair as she was good. If I seem to boast of Miss Gertrude overmuch, it was at least a weakness in which all Nestorton indulged likewise. She was higher-hearted, placed more above all meanness, I do believe, than ever woman was, and yet she was not proud. She came amongst the haunts of poverty and disease as naturally and unconcernedly as a sunbeam. Her nobleness was discovered mainly in the grace that attended everything which her hands were set to do, whether they were pouring out the rich red wine from the cellars of Nestor Hall, for the comfort of the sick, or arranging in a broken jug, upon a window-sill, a score of simple wild-flowers. Those folks who call the poor ungrateful, and who have yet been really good to the poor, must have erred strangely in their manner of giving. The kind word, even though the kind deed be lacking, is not lightly held, believe me; but the kind deed without the kind word, gets indeed small heart-thanks. Few of us have our human perceptions so dulled by poverty but that we know our friends from our mere benefactors; and even the beggars by the roadside don't like to have charitable half-pence thrown at their heads.

Thus, Gertrude Mountesdil was the first of her lordly race who ever reigned in the hearts of those about her. When my poor Molly was leaving me for heaven twelve months ago, the dear young lady spent an hour a day and more in our little cottage, and so I learned to know how good she was. Master Wilmot, the young painter—since Nestor Hall no longer patronised the arts—was then living at the Pig and Whistle in our village, instead of the Mountesdil Arms (which did not say much for his taste), and met Miss Gertrude under my roof for the first time. I saw how it was with him at a glance, having had some experience of artist-love at first sight already; and when he said that he must call the next day for my keys again, because the altar-piece was so very well worth studying, I walked a little way back with him upon his road home, and gave him a good slice of my mind. I told him how, once before, just such another painter-chap as he, and not so determined-a-looking fellow either, had carried off the pride of Nestor Hall, to the ruin of all concerned—'which,' observed I, 'young gentleman, shall not, if I can prevent it, happen twice. It was ill enough for Miss Eleanor, who was fit to hold her own wherever she was; but Miss Gertrude is another sort of young lady, and, by your leave, shall never marry a'——

'A what?' cried he, flushing to his temples, and looking for a moment just like poor Mr Daynton of old times, only with a greater passion than he would have ever shewn. 'Marry a what?'

'Marry beneath her,' said I, coolly enough. 'She's a Mountesdil; I know the whole lot of them, and they ain't good for painters to marry. Not, sir,' added I, for I would not have slandered her to any man for any earthly purpose—'not but that Miss Gertrude is an angel, and would bring a blessing with her upon whomsoever she wedded.'

At which he seemed to be a good deal mollified, and went his way. Still, as he hung about the village weeks enough for the altar-piece to have been copied a dozen times, and as I had seen him speak to our young mistress without rebuff, I made bold to tell her, out of my love and duty, and as an old man who was under greater obligations to her than he could ever repay, in how great a danger she might be lying. Her rising colour and dewy eyes told me one tale, and her quiet, self-possessed reply another; but I believed the second one, because I knew Miss Gertrude to be truth itself. She said that if she had loved Mr Wilmot ever so much, she should not dream of marrying him without the consent of her father; and that, knowing beforehand what his answer would be, she had given it to the young man as her own, and so dismissed him. For all this, I think, love concealed, 'like the worm in the bud,' as is writ upon one of our tombstones, 'preyed on her damask cheek,' and from that hour stole away her spirits. There was no breast at home wherein she could repose her sorrow. Her mother was unaffectionate, or, at least, quite undemonstrative of affection, and a victim to nervous disorders. Her father had become, in these latter years, moody, suspicious, and uncompanionable from mental causes, as well as from physical. The Mountesdils had been famous for their iron constitutions and their determined wills; but Beauchamp had been growing weaker in body, and more wavering in mind, for a long period. The broken man, the hypochondriac woman, in that unpeopled Hall, must have indeed been cheerless company for the young lady. She did her duty, nevertheless, which was always a labour of love to her; and when her father's afflictions drew near their close in death, she seemed, with her quiet usefulness and undespairing ways, as though she kept the awful Shadow away. It was, they say, an evil death-bed. The healing spirit who was the sick man's nurse was herself sometimes the object of his fear; he would bid her go, leave him, and quit the house, as the cause of all his misery and disease. His love for his daughter was only manifest while he muttered curses against her whose claim to the Mountesdil property Gertrude's birth had barred. His wife, nervous and terror-stricken, went about the house wringing her hands, and complaining that she was being left without a protector, and exposed to the persecutions of the bitter Eleanor. It was strange how even Mrs Beauchamp, comparatively a newcomer into the family, yet dreaded this exiled woman. Her character, her appeals, her rebuffs, were well known to her; the very lack of all communication with Mrs Daynton of late years, seemed to her but as the pause during which the tempest gathers itself up for some terrible burst. The event proved her fears to have been indeed well grounded.

Upon the morning of the burial-day of Beauchamp Mountesdil, when half the lords of acres in the county were assembled in the great dining-room, and the tenantry in the steward's chambers, with their scarfs and weepers, as though they grieved so bad a man was dead, and so excellent a young lady his heiress; when hundreds of poor folks, come to see the show, were thronging the park, and the mourning-coaches stood before the great hall-door, and the hearse, with its black sea of plumes, was awaiting its unconscious burden—Eleanor Daynton came.

Her coach was not a mourning one, nor its pace such as befitted a funeral. She sat in a dirty, travel-stained post-chaise, whirled by four horses, which scattered the crowd to left and right, and routed the army of mutes with little ceremony. The post-boys would have drawn up before they reached the door, but the imperious woman would not permit them, and caused the nodding hearse to be backed out of the way for her. She was in gay colours, contrasting strangely with the scene, and still more strangely with her own stern countenance and malicious looks. Another carriage followed, with two persons in it, whom she beckoned to come after her into the house. She swept through the entrance-passages into the great hall, where the coffin was still lying in state, and with a cruel smile upon her face, bade one of the domestics, whom she knew, to 'fetch the Woman and the Girl down'—who were of course above, in a private chamber.

'My Lady and Miss Gertrude?' said the man, in doubt as to whom she meant.

'Yes,' thundered she—'the lying woman and the cheating girl; those two. If they come not, say you from me, it will be the worse for them.'

There, by her dead brother's corpse, she waited for some minutes, no more heeding the gaping crowd of servants than if they had been stones, till presently Miss Gertrude, pale, but quite collected, came down alone to her.

'Mrs Daynton,' said she firmly, 'this is cruel indeed. My mother'——

'Liar!' broke in the other. 'Come hither in with me.'

She took the girl by the wrist, and led her into the dining-room among all the guests. Her two companions followed, and closed the door behind them.

'Do you remember me,' she demanded, 'any of you here? You, my Lord Trevor; and you, Sir Richard; and you,' turning to a third person. 'I at least, on my side, remember you. Poverty, want, disgrace, however, alter women strangely. I am Eleanor Mountesdil, gentlemen—she that married the painter. I was the girl whom father, and brethren, and friends—oh, excellent friends!—turned their backs upon, and refused so much as to speak with; she who was left in the slough of poverty without so much as one hand outstretched for pity's sake to help her. I was the woman whose little angel-daughter died of Want, murdered by that man—for one—whose body lies in the coffin yonder, but whose soul is in hell-fire. I am the widow whom he strove to wrong; from whom, and from her son, I say, that man would have kept back this inheritance by fraud. This girl, whom I have by the wrist here, and who is so bold and impudent that she blushes not even now, is an Irish peasant's brat whom Beauchamp and his wife have reared thus long and passed off as their own. For sixteen years and more, they have acted this deceit to the life before you all, but never for one moment did they deceive *me*. I tracked them and their wicked doings like a sleuth-hound from the very first, and now I behold my quarry. I have held the proofs of this thing in my possession for years, and these men—lawyers both—whom I have brought with me, well know it, and that I hold them now. I have waited—not patiently, Heaven knows, but at least without sign—month after month, year after year, for the day of retribution to arrive; and now, behold, it is come!

'Some score of years ago, I was discarded, penniless, disgraced by the masters of this house wherein we stand; two years later, they refused me the least pittance for the support of my ailing child. She died. They wronged me, one and all, even on their death-beds; the last, that felon corpse yonder, the worst. The law cannot now reach him; but as for the woman, his widow, whom you have used so fairly, and feasted with, and flattered to the height, she shall taste prison-fare, wear prison-garb, breathe prison-air, and reap, in all respects, the harvest of her deeds.'

The whole company were so astounded by these revelations, and by the imperious behaviour of her who made them, that no one interrupted or interfered with her in the least; the two persons who accompanied her corroborated all her statements; and it, moreover, was reported very soon, that Mrs Beauchamp, upon hearing that Eleanor Daynton was below, and the nature of her errand, had, in a paroxysm of terror, confessed everything that had been alleged against her. The furious accuser recommenced her denunciations unopposed. 'Girl—bastard—cheat!' cried she, addressing the unfortunate Gertrude, who, although deadly white, never once quailed before her accuser, or trembled in a limb—'you act well to the last, but your farce is well-nigh over. Innocent or guilty'——

'Innocent, madam, innocent; I will stake my life on 't,' cried an impetuous voice; a young man who had just entered the room clove the interposing crowd, as a wedge cleaves driest wood, and releasing Miss Gertrude from the arm that held her as in a vice, encircled her protectingly with his own. It was the young painter Wilmot who thus fronted the revengeful woman, reflecting in his masculine features the same fierce determination which glowed so unnaturally in those of Mrs Daynton.

'Theodore, Theodore!' exclaimed she, passionately, but with a perceptible vacillation in her tone, 'cross me not in this matter at least. Heaven is my witness—I have nothing but your good at heart.'

'I believe it, mother,' cried young Daynton, for he it was—'I believe it, and that is why I appeal to you with confidence. Mrs Mountesdil is my aunt by marriage, and must be respected. This young lady—who is as conversant with fraud as an angel, and who is of a nobler sort, spring she from whatsoever source she may, than any who have yet ruled in Nestor Hall—is my affianced bride, mother, and therefore your own daughter.'

Eleanor Daynton trembled from head to foot; but she knew what sort of spirit her son had inherited, and from whose side it came, and was silent.

'My lords and gentlemen of the county,' continued he, 'if, perchance, in future you may deign to visit us, I take this opportunity, although, indeed, the time may seem scarcely fitting, to introduce you to the future mistress of this house.'

The young man lifted his hat, and had led Miss Gertrude to the stair-foot, on her way to rejoin Mrs Mountesdil, when Eleanor beckoned him towards her.

'I will go with her myself,' whispered she, in a dry hoarse tone.

Theodore raised his mother's hand to his lips, and kissed it respectfully.

The two women then retired; and Mr Daynton, taking his place in the funeral procession as chief-mourner, fulfilled his duties, in the unavoidable absence of much feeling, I must say, with admirable credit.

The late visit of this young man to Nestorton, under the feigned name which he and his mother then bore, had been paid contrary to her wishes, but not without her knowledge. She had dreaded lest his sympathies should be in any degree excited in favour of the young usurper; and her heart was cruelly wrung upon finding, on his return—although he confessed it not—that her boy had indeed fallen in love with his worst foe. Dotingly fond of him as she was, she could not bring herself to contemplate such a union with calmness; and being aware by experiment of the extreme determination of his character, she had come down to the Hall to compass her long-cherished scheme of retribution during his absence, and without informing him of her intention. She had hoped that the wound which she should then inflict upon the girl would be too wide for the possibility of after-healing; and, to do her justice, she had struck vigorously enough. An accident, however, had informed Theodore of what was going on; and his mother, conscious of the clandestine wrong she had intended to do him, and not venturing to provoke him further, had virtually given over opposition, as has been told.

Nay, such miracles can a heavenly nature still effect, such power to turn away wrath has gentle virtue, that the iron-hearted Eleanor was melted in course of time towards her son's Gertrude. Her brother Beauchamp's widow was treated in no way harshly, it being indeed abundantly manifest that she had been but the tool of her husband. She voluntarily preferred, however, to retire with her jointure to her family, rather than to remain mistress of Nestor Hall. There, then, the stately Eleanor now bears rule, her government greatly tempered, however, by the mild influence of her beloved daughter-in-law; and there the young painter practises his art without much eye to a purchaser. The old church, scene of his mother's betrothal, and my little cottage, wherein he first beheld his bride, are, I think, his two favourite subjects. His wife has taught him to look upon the dwellings of the poor from other than the mere picturesque point of view. We in Nestorton have indeed good reason to love and admire the young couple. We seem to have borne the extinction of the Mountesdil name with considerable equanimity; and in spite of a score of legends to the contrary, the grand old towers still stand of Nestor Hall.

THE GREAT OCEAN.

The Atlantic Ocean occupies a furrow grooved down into the surface of the earth. This furrow is about three thousand miles wide, and six thousand five hundred miles long. It extends continuously from the arctic into the antarctic basin, and pursues a somewhat zigzag track. Until very recently, the depth of the furrow was scarcely known; but now, on account of the improvements which have been made in the process of deep-sea sounding, a very tolerable acquaintance has been formed with these invisible recesses. Many hundreds of perfectly accurate soundings have been taken in different parts of the Atlantic, and by means of these the general distribution of its bed has been mapped down. The distance of this bed from the surface of the water varies exceedingly in different situations. The bottom of this vast ocean is indeed as much broken up into mountain-ridges and depressed valleys as the uncovered surface of the ground; it has its alpine districts, its plains, and its table-lands. The greatest depression, however, only a little exceeds five miles of perpendicular descent, and the greater part of the ocean-floor lies at a considerably less depth than this. The deepest portion of the Atlantic is immediately to the south of the Banks of Newfoundland. Its shallowest parts are, of course, generally along the lines of coast. Islands may be described as the summits of mountains, reared from the submarine abyss sufficiently high to emerge into the air.

The Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea are considerably shallower than the rest of the Atlantic basin. The water scarcely anywhere in them reaches a greater depth than one mile. These gulfs, in fact, may almost be considered to take rank with the system of the vast American lakes, merely being peculiar in having their eastern borders broken down so as to admit the influx of the ocean. The West India Islands consist of the highest parts of the broken borders, rising at intervals above the water. Viewed in this light, it is the chain of the West India Islands, rather than the Isthmus of Darien and its continuation, which traces the true outlines of the American continent.

The next most shallow portion of the Atlantic, after the coast-belt and the Mexican and Caribbean Gulfs, is a strip of about four hundred miles broad, lying between the 48th and the 55th parallels of north latitude. This is a continuation of the table-land zone which runs east and west almost round the earth. It is a part of this zone which in America divides the tracts draining northward into the Arctic Sea, and south-eastward into the Atlantic; and which, in Europe and Asia, separates the waters flowing into the German Ocean and Arctic basin, from those which tend to the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean. The island of Newfoundland indicates the unwillingness of this tract to submerge itself beneath the sea, on the one hand; and the British Isles on the other. Between Newfoundland and the British Isles, the Atlantic itself is narrowed to between eighteen and nineteen hundred miles, and scarcely dips beyond two miles at the mid-point. It is upon this strip of submarine table-land—rendered still more even by the fine deposits shed over it by the currents setting northward from the tropical regions—that the still inarticulate telegraphic cable is laid.

It would require a very long sum, indeed, in arithmetic to calculate the quantity of water this vast oceanic basin holds; but the water is not pure water: it contains a very large quantity of salt dissolved away in it. In every pint of the sea-water there is more than half an ounce of solid ingredient, which would be left as a dry crystalline powder on the liquid being evaporated by heat. If all the water of the Atlantic were steamed away, there would remain enough salt deposited from it to cover an extent of seven millions of square miles, one entire mile deep. This saline substance consists chiefly of common salt, compounds of lime and magnesia in a soluble form, and compounds of potash and soda. There is also a little iron mingled with these ingredients, and, according to recent investigations, still less silver. Here, then, the question naturally arises: If the ocean contain this large quantity of solid substance, where has it primarily procured the dense compounds? No one knows how far it may have begun its terrestrial career as salt brine; but, apart from this consideration, it is plain enough that its liquid floods never could have been pure water. Rivers themselves are not pure: they are fed by rains; and these rains wash down with them, as they course through the river-channels, everything which they can dissolve during their progress. All these dissolved matters are carried with the streams into the ocean. Fresh water evaporates from the ocean continually to form the clouds, and to supply the fountains of the rain. These vapours, however, cannot carry up with them to the clouds a single particle of saline or earthy material. As the rivers, then, bring down to the sea, day by day, fresh stores of dissolved saline solids, and as none of these stores can be dissipated under evaporation, as the water itself is, it follows that from this agency alone the sea must at length become salt.

But it is a curious and remarkable fact, that, although the sea must thus necessarily become salt, it is not now becoming *daily more salt*. Ever since curious and chemical man began to analyse the composition of the ocean-water, it has appeared that this composition is fixed and unalterable for any given tract. This seeming anomaly is perfectly explained by the aid of science. Although water cannot carry solid matters out of the sea-basin up to the sky, there are active operatives in commission which can and do convey them away. There are myriads of creatures which live in the sea, and which want bones and shells, all to be made of earthy or saline ingredients. These bones and shells, when the creatures die, are quietly laid at the bottom of the sea. There are microscopic races of living beings which are peculiarly active in this sort of work. The individuals of these races are so small that they cannot even be seen until magnified, by optical instruments, many hundreds of times. Yet these little creatures cannot content themselves in their invisible existence without clothing their pigmy frames in a complete panoply of defensive and beautifully decorated mail. These coats of mail are all cunningly fabricated at the expense of the solid ingredients of the sea; and when their work has been done, they are deposited, as substances no longer soluble, on the ocean-bed, forming layers of increasing density and thickness. Many of the earthy beds of the terrestrial surface, now taking rank as dry land, have been primarily formed in this way, from solid substances extracted from the water of the sea.

But it is not strictly true that all parts of the wide ocean contain exactly the same proportions of solid ingredients; there is most evaporation of pure water to the sky in the warm inter-tropical regions, and there is most deposit of pure water, again, in the temperate and cold regions. From the broad zone of sea which lies between the tropics, a depth of not less than fifteen feet is evaporated in the year. In the German Ocean and the North Sea, the amount of evaporation is considerably less than this. Hence, the equatorial regions of the sea get to contain proportionally a larger quantity of salt than other parts, because the fresh water is so rapidly dissipated; while, on the other hand, the temperate and cold seas are continually diluted by the fresh rains which fall into them. The water of the North Sea contains one per cent. less salt than that of the mid-Atlantic. The water of the Baltic is only one-half as salt. Strong brine is, however, of greater specific density and weight than weaker brine. A cubic inch of mid-Atlantic water weighs some grains more than a cubic inch of the water of the North Sea; the heavy water of the tropics is more drawn towards the earth's centre than the lighter water of the regions nearer to the poles. It results from this, that the heavy saline tropical waters *flow* downward towards the spots which are held by the lighter liquid: they push the lighter liquid out of the way, just as heavy cold air pushes light warm air out of its way in an artificially heated room, and drives it up the chimney; the light waters of the colder realms, of course, *flowing* along above in the opposite direction, to take the place vacated by the heavier fluid. The difference of saltness in diverse portions of the ocean thus never passes beyond a certain degree. The saline water of the tropics goes northward and southward, to mingle with the fresher water there; and the fresher water of the cold regions constantly comes to dilute the saline liquid nearer to the equator. If it were not for this influence, the mid-ocean districts would be progressively growing more and more salt, from year to year, instead of remaining only at a fixed degree of greater saltness.

There is thus, then, a general tendency of the comparatively dense and saline water of the tropical sea to flow as a current towards the poles, and of the comparatively rare and fresh water of the temperate and cold seas to flow as a current towards the equator. The actual progress of these currents is considerably modified by circumstances which control and affect the conditions of evaporation and deposition—as, for instance, the contour and distribution of neighbouring land and of coast-lines. It is also influenced by the earth's whirling movement; the water going towards the poles carries with it a greater *easterly* velocity than the districts possess, at which it is successively arriving, and consequently its northward or southward flow is bent towards the east. The water going towards the equator carries with it a less eastward velocity than the regions at which it is arriving, on account of getting constantly into larger and yet larger circles, which nevertheless all revolve at the same rate of one complete turn in twenty-four hours; this water therefore *lags back;* its northward or southward flow is deflected towards the west. The water lying between the equator and the poles thus sweeps round for ever in a mighty whirl. In the North Atlantic, the course of this grand whirlpool is very distinctly traced. It sets across from the African to the American shore in the equatorial region, proceeds northward along the coast of America, turns eastward in high latitudes, and then flows southward across the Bay of Biscay, and along the border of Africa. As a matter of course, all floating substances are drawn into the centre of the whirl, and are accumulated there. Vast beds of drift and sea-weed stretch for miles over the water of the portion of the Atlantic which occupies this central position, the drift-covered tract being distinguished under the name of the Sargasso Sea.

But there is one peculiar feature incidentally added to this oceanic whirl of the North Atlantic, which is of exceeding interest—the equatorial current flows north of Cape St Roque through the Caribbean Sea into the Gulf of Mexico; thence it is constrained to pour itself out northward through the narrow opening left between Florida and Cuba: it cannot turn southward because of the projecting barrier established in that direction by the portions of South America extending between Venezuela and Cape St Roque. Where the great current of the North Atlantic escapes from its Mexican embayment, it takes the form of a grand oceanic river, which is distinguished by striking characteristics from the surrounding water, and which, on account of the source whence it issues, is known under the name of the Gulf Stream.

This great sea-river is more than half a mile deep, and it is many miles wide. It runs with a velocity of four miles and a half in the hour, and it contains within itself a volume of water one thousand times greater than that mightiest of fresh-water giants, the river of the Amazons. The water of the stream is very dense, being composed entirely of liquid derived from the warm equatorial region which has paid its tax of evaporation; on account of its great density, the water here wears a brilliant deep-blue tint. As a general rule, the greener sea-water is, the smaller is its proportion of saline ingredient; the darker and the more blue it is, the larger is its amount of salt.

The dense and deep-blue water of the Gulf Stream has, however, one quality in it which is of more consequence than its weight—it possesses a steady high temperature. It has flowed across the hottest region of the earth in its westward progress, and has then been caught, as it were, in the Gulf of Mexico, and retained, on account of the small outlet through which it has to make its escape, under the heating rays of the Mexican sun. Where it issues from the Florida channel, the thermometer marks a temperature of eighty-six degrees; and for many hundred miles further north, it continues to be eight and ten degrees warmer than the surrounding tracts of the ocean. It crosses the fortieth parallel of north latitude during the winter with a genial temperature that would properly belong to the summer of this latitude. Where it flows, the sixtieth parallel is as warm as the fortieth parallel is where it is absent. The absolute quantity of heat conveyed away from the Caribbean and Mexican seas by the Gulf Stream, in a single year, is sufficient to raise mountains of iron to the melting-point, and to keep a stream of molten iron larger than the Mississippi continually flowing. Most of this heat is scattered through districts that would be very frigid and cold but for its agency. Great Britain and Ireland really enjoy a climate which is many degrees milder and more steady than it would otherwise be, because they lie in the path of this hot-water flow. Nature, indeed, keeps a hot-water apparatus continually at work in their behoof for the mitigation of the winter's cold, the furnace being the equatorial sun, and the pipe of transmission the ocean-channel. The east wind cannot be softened, as the west wind is, by the equatorial breath of the current sent forth from the Mexican gulf. Various forms of tropical life make their way to great distances in the Gulf Stream, although they would perish immediately if thrown across its banks into the chiller ocean.

Tropical fishes, such as the bonita and the albercore, deceived by its warmth, have upon occasion taken a look at the British Isles, and paid the penalty of their rashness in the nets of the English Channel. The Gulf Stream being in a degree fed and fostered by the sun's heat, makes its appearance further north in the Atlantic basin, when the sun is to the north of the equatorial line, than when it is to the south of it. During the summer of the northern hemisphere, the hot tropical water gets pressed further towards the boreal realms, by the colder and denser water of the austral regions, then making its way further in that direction. The Gulf Stream pendulates with the season backward and forward over the ocean to a certain extent, because the great waste of waters on either hand has its heat and specific density changed at different times of the year. The dense and cold water encroaches upon the mid-ocean region, as the oppositely retiring sun allows of the encroachment, and then drives the deep-blue and warm ocean-river before it, bending its curve upwards before the pressure, as it might a barrier or wall of elastic substance there exposed to it.

The air which rests upon the water of the great ocean is made to flow hither and thither in currents just like the water itself. The primary cause of this movement, as with the water, is the difference of density and specific weight which the elastic fluid has in different situations. The difference in this case is, however, entirely due to the effect of temperature. Cold air is heavy, and warm air is light, therefore cold air presses itself into all the lowest positions on the earth's surface, and drives the light and warm air away before it. There are, however, so many important and striking results issuing out of the movements of the ocean-atmosphere, all materially affecting both the science and practice of wide ocean-sailing, that such a subject must be allowed the dignity of standing by itself.

A LITERARY MILLIONAIRE.

It is an evil which has long been prevalent under the sun, that no man's biography can be written without that of his father, and even of his grandfather, if he chance to have had one, being tacked on to it. A man of genius such as Carlyle, going about his heroical work in this manner, gives us a couple of excellent full-length portraits, which we are thankful enough to accept instead of one; but a man of moderate abilities, such as the author of these *Memoirs of William Beckford of Fonthill*,* provokes us with his unnecessary digging after fossil genealogical trees to a dangerous degree. We do not care to wade through a whole family-vault full of dry bones, to get at the skeleton of even a really great man; and when the greatness is somewhat doubtful, the toil is proportionally distasteful. What has the time of Edward the Confessor, and the antiquarian twaddle about Bekeford or Beceford, with which the first of these two volumes opens, to do with the author of *Vathek*—with the social lion of the beginning of this present century? We almost wonder that the tower of Babel is not invoked as a prelude to the histories of those of Fonthill and Lansdowne. That, after the battle of Bosworth Field, in 1485, 'a blank of 217 years occurs in the annals of the Beckford family,' is to us a most cheering circumstance; and, as far as we are concerned, the biographer worries himself very unnecessarily in the attempt to supply it. We will even pass over the first fifteen pages of proved genealogy, without so much as 'one longing, lingering look behind,' and set our feet upon the island of Jamaica, and within the eighteenth century, at once.

The Beckfords had been a West Indian family of enormous wealth for several generations, ere their riches culminated in the person of Peter Beckford, our hero's grandfather; who seems to have possessed a revenue arising, exclusive of mortgages and similar investments, from no less than twenty-four plantations, and the labour of twelve hundred slaves. The eldest son of this man died in early manhood, and to what property the next brother—member for the city of London, and father of the subject of these memoirs—succeeded, may be inferred from the fact, that on the demise of a *younger* brother, Richard, he (William) obtained ten thousand *a year*. He was sent over to England at the age of fourteen, and put to school at Westminster, with Dr Johnson for one of his companions. After residing in this country many years, probably as his father's agent, he was deeply smitten, while travelling in Holland, with the beautiful daughter of a Leyden shopkeeper. It is the only gleam of romance which illumines the harsh annals of the whole of this family of Kilmanseggs. 'Gold still gold, hard, yellow, and cold,' is the melancholy burden almost every page; and this fragment of a love-tune, itself, fares but unhappily amid the clash of the precious coin. She proved unfaithful to the man of metal, after having born him a son in London—'My father had scores of sons, sir,' was once the quiet observation of the author of *Vathek*—and transferred her affections to a young gentleman of colour; whereupon William Beckford took to politics in disgust. He was chosen representative both for London and Petersfield in 1747; and having elected to sit for the former place, presented the latter with a sum of money to pave its streets with, and console it for the disappointment. He, at the same time, effected his brother Richard's return for Bristol in the face of a strong opposition, and notwithstanding that the candidate was in Jamaica. The self-will and insolence of the family, inherited from their West Indian ancestry—one of whom, president of the Jamaica House of Representatives, died in a fit of passion because it had the temerity to negative a motion which he wished to succeed—was, of course, increased by every victory of this kind; and when we are told that Mr Beckford senior's manner was 'not agreeable,' we can easily believe it without referring it to the reason assigned by his biographer—'that ardent and impetuous turn of his mind, to which he was accustomed to give way.'

He was elected lord-mayor of London in 1762, and, as its continuous representative for many years, was a firm ally to his friend Mr Pitt against the Bute faction. He was thus constantly opposed to George III., whom, however, we find him thus alluding to, in public, in the fulsome manner of that age, as the 'truly patriot king,' and 'that young monarch whose qualities are so amiable, and whose resemblance so exact, in every feature of body and mind, to that great and amiable young prince, Edward VI.' When the second humble address was presented by the city to the above patriot majesty, praying for a condemnation of ministers in the affair of John Wilkes and the violated right of election, the king returned a somewhat abrupt negative; whereupon Lord-mayor Beckford was bold enough to make *a reply*, in the course of which he warned the king against whomsoever 'had dared to alienate his majesty's affections from his loyal subjects in general, and from the city of London in particular, as being an enemy to the royal person, a violator of the public peace, and a betrayer of our happy constitution, as it was established at the *glorious and necessary revolution*.' In consequence of this, when Lord-mayor Beckford went up to court, some time afterwards, to congratulate majesty upon the birth of a royal child, his lordship got very considerably snubbed.

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* Charles J. Skeet, London.

This man, however, was himself, in some sort, a king. He kept up the splendour of his life even to the last; and three months before his death, gave an entertainment at the Mansion-house to the members of both Houses of Parliament—with the intention of 'lessening the distance between the conflicting parties in the state'—such as was without a parallel in magnificence. 'The guests went in procession to the city from the Houses of Parliament. Six dukes, two marquises, twenty-three earls, four viscounts, fourteen barons, and eighteen baronets, were among those who attended; and the dinner cost the lord-mayor, on his private account, the sum of L.10,000.'

Mr Beckford died at his mansion in Soho Square, in 1770, when his son William was only eleven years old; the offspring of his father's second marriage with the daughter and co-heir of the Honourable George Hamilton, M.P. for Wells.

Dr Lettice, D.D., was the happy person selected as bear-leader to this young gentleman, at the not very large stipend—considering the gigantic character of the youth's fortune—of L.300 a year. The biographer appears to be astonished that 'a handsome breakfast-room and bed-chamber, communicating with the library,' were set apart for this gentleman's private use, as though the tutors of young men of station were seldom permitted any other place of retirement than their sleeping-apartment. Unconsciously, indeed, as it seems to us, through the mere study of this auriferous family, the memoir-writer has himself become baptised with the *eau d'or*, and bows down, and worships, and cannot see any wrong in this little golden image which West Indian nigger-driving has set up. He will hardly permit Lord Chatham—Lord-mayor Beckford's friend—to chide the youth for his over-fondness, already very remarkable, for oriental stories; or the Duchess of Queensberry, in her eightieth year, to give the spoiled lad a lesson in manners.

Before young Beckford had completed his seveneenth year, he had printed his first literary work, he *Memoirs of Extraordinary Painters*. The account which he gives of its origin was, that 'he felt prompted o write something of the kind, by remarking the idiculous memoirs and criticisms on certain Dutch ainters in *Vies des Peintres Flamands;*' and in the econd place, to play off a trick upon his mother's ousekeeper at Fonthill, whose conceit and ignorance, xhibited in shewing the pictures there to strangers, ere rather striking. The book was at once a satire pon the Flemish biographers, and a printed guide y which the housekeeper's descriptions were renered more exquisitely absurd. We cannot say that e extracts give us a desire to peruse the volume; it doubtless a clever production for a youth of sixen, who, like Dr Johnson's dog, which walked upon s hind-legs, does not indeed do such things well, but is wonderful to see him do them at all.

Young Beckford, as was the custom in his time for ds of fortune, spends a considerable time abroad, d goes to stare at Voltaire at Ferney, as being the ght thing to do, rather than because he felt any rticular interest in that philosopher.

'You see, gentlemen, a poor octogenarian about quit the world,' was Voltaire's remark on introdug himself; and he seems to have made no other rth recording, during the interview. After his sidence at Geneva, but previous to his making 'the and tour,' as it was then called, young Beckford nt, in the summer of 1779, to Plymouth, at that e 'threatened with a descent by the united fleets France and Spain, consisting of between sixty and enty sail of the line, and a host of frigates, all ng off in sight of the citadel;' almost as bad a state of things as is predicted for us by Sir Francis Head.

After a protracted sojourn upon the continent, the young man returned to Fonthill-Gifford, Wilts—his birthplace—upon the occasion of his coming of age. The entertainment of some thousand persons on that auspicious day must have made a hole even in money-bags such as those to which he then succeeded—namely, *a million in ready money, and an income of one hundred thousand a year*. Next to Persian stories, he seems to have liked Italian landscapes, and he almost at once returned to Italy, with an enormous retinue, comprising an artist, a musician, and a doctor, with attendants who filled three carriages; and besides these, there were led horses and outriders. At one part of his journey he and his party were mistaken for the Emperor of Austria and suite on an incognito visit to Rome. Even the cardinal legates were deceived, and the curiosity evinced on all sides was excessive. 'The mistake was very useful in expediting the means of travelling; but on the other hand, gave a very imperial complexion to the inn reckonings. It was found a task of difficulty to undeceive the greater part of the hosts on the way, who were obstinately fond of adhering to their profitable error.'

In 1783, Mr Beckford, at twenty-four, was *persuaded* to print his travelling letters, of which he had five hundred copies struck off in quarto, under the title of *Dreams, Waking Thoughts, and Incidents, in a Series of Letters from Various Parts of Europe*. Some of his many toadies, however, having declared that the too lively imagination, and fire, and sensibility, and other uncommon virtues therein manifested, would be likely to prejudice him in the House of Commons, and lead ministers to imagine him unfit for solid business, the whole edition, except half-a-dozen copies, was destroyed. It is certainly a marvel that a young man, so surrounded with flatterers, should have written so good a book as *Vathek*, which was also composed about this time.

He tells Mr Redding, who interrogated him upon the matter in 1835: 'I wrote *Vathek* when I was twenty-two years old. I wrote it at one sitting, and in French. It cost me three days and two nights of hard labour. I never took my clothes off the whole time.'

This, we imagine, was a somewhat eastern and hyperbolic version of the actual facts. A 'sitting' of sixty hours must have worn out any mortal pair of eyes and breeches. But, however it was done, it was done well; and as an oriental story, written by a stranger to the east, has a deeper eastern colouring than any other, with the single exception, perhaps, of *Lalla Rookh*. Nothing like the description of the Hall of Eblis, said Mr Beckford, was really to be found in eastern fiction—the knowledge of which, by the by, he acquired through translations only. 'It was the creation of my own fancy. The hall of old Fonthill House was lofty and loud-echoing, whilst numerous doors led from it into different parts of the building, through dim long-winding passages. It was from that I formed my imaginary Hall. . . . . All the females mentioned in *Vathek* were portraits of those in the domestic establishment at old Fonthill, their imaginary good or ill qualities being exaggerated to suit my purpose.'

In May 1783, Mr Beckford married Lady Margaret Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Aboyne, and sister of the late Marquis of Huntly, and he seems to have been very tenderly attached to her. Within three years, however, the poor lady died in childbirth at Vevay with their second daughter, afterwards Duchess of Hamilton. This bereavement affected the widower to an extreme degree; he could not remain in the country where he had lost her, but took to his old wandering life again for a little, and then settled for a few months in Portugal. This short stay has been curiously magnified into the building of a palatial mansion at Monserrat, which Byron apostrophised in the well-known line in *Childe Harold.*

Another and more recent traveller informs us that 'the princely mansion was an exceedingly elegant and tasteful building, *quite in the English style;*' whereas the place was simply a Portuguese country-house taken by the month.

Our great millionaire of course 'moved in the first circles' of Portuguese society, and a very ignorant and credulous *noblesse* they seem to have been. 'Going to dine at the Anjeja palace with Don Diego de Noronha, he found the eldest hope of the family learning to look out of the window, the chief employment of high-life in Portugal. One young priest who seemed to have taken the lead of the others told some marvellous stories. The late queen had pounded up a pearl of great value to take as a medical potion. Then a nun of such a convent had intrigued with Beelzebub, and was in consequence sent to the inquisition, and the window in the convent by which his satanic majesty had entered was walled up and painted with crosses. These things were related in sober seriousness. It was added that, by the precautions taken, no such attempt could ever again be successful. What a state of society must that have been where such things are not only related but credited!'

The amusements of the princess-regent and her court seem to have been far from intellectual. She actually insisted upon our millionaire running a foot-race against two of her female attendants in the royal garden, and then upon his dancing a bolero with another.

But after all, the principal interest attaching to the author of *Vathek* is a local one, and Fonthill Abbey and Lansdowne Tower are at least as familiar to the ear as the name of the man who built them. Fonthill House, as erected by the elder Beckford, was the finest mansion, perhaps, in the west of England, and the entrance-hall of it, the largest, probably, in the whole country. When the great organ within it was burnt down, and other loss to the amount of L.30,000 sustained, by fire, the old man had heard the news with calmness, and only replied: 'Well, then, we must build it up again;' and this had been done. But the son doomed the whole renovated pile to ruin, and erected his celebrated 'Abbey' on a more convenient site. He had a horror of trespassers and field-sports, and having encountered a whole bevy of men and dogs in his plantations one morning, he issued a notice for 'a contractor, who was to build a wall around all the planted and arable part of his land, extending about seven miles, within six months.' It was twelve feet high, with a sort of *chevaux de frise* at the top of it. This it was which doubtless gave rise to the idea of his wishing to cut himself off from mankind, whereas he was always superintending, in person, hundreds of work-people. He had thirty servants in attendance on him, besides the following gentlemen of his household: his physician, Dr Errhart; that eminent musician, the Chevalier Franchi; the Abbé Maquin, antiquary and herald; and one or two artists. He gave a magnificent entertainment at Fonthill in honour of the hero of the Nile, about whose physical nervousness he tells a singular story. He was about to take him for a drive through some of the 'fifteen or twenty miles of enclosed ornamental ground about the Abbey,' to shew off his planting improvements. 'Nelson mounted by my side in a phaeton, drawn by four well-trained horses, which I drove; there was not the least danger, the horses being perfectly under my command, and long driven by myself. Singular to say, we had not gone far before I observed a peculiar anxiety on his countenance, and presently he said: "This is too much for me—you must set me down." All my persuasion would not do. He would descend, and I walked the vehicle back again.' Amidst a broadside of cannon-balls, which was the admiral's element, we do not doubt that the author of *Vathek* would have insisted upon being 'set down' in a safe place in *his* turn.

In 1801, the colossal fortune of Mr Beckford received its first shock, in his being deprived, by an order of the court of Chancery, and in consequence of the want of a title, of an estate of twelve thousand *per annum*, which had been in his family sixty years. He had to compromise similar lawsuits by very large sums of ready money. He was continually being plundered by agents and strangers; and finally, the depreciation of West Indian property reduced the poor man to comparative penury—some miserable hundred and fifty thousand pounds. He had to part with that Abbey which had cost him more than a quarter of a million, and to subside into Lansdowne Crescent, Bath. Soon after he had removed thither, a man upon his death-bed, who had been formerly clerk of the works at Fonthill, sent for him, and confessed to him that a certain arch which was to have been turned under the great tower, and for the execution of which he had received the money, had not been so turned; and, therefore, that the place was dangerous. Mr Beckford immediately informed the new owner of Fonthill, his friend Mr Farquhar, of this serious flaw; but that gentleman thought lightly of it, and the tower came down with a run into the marble court, one fine morning, as prophesied. Mr Beckford had a passion for towers, and built a splendid one at Lansdowne, which commanded one of the finest prospects in England. Here, again, the barren wastes were turned into an earthly paradise, and the beautiful gardens reappeared, which seemed to have been brought bodily out of Italy. Mr Beckford was an amateur landscape-gardener of great merit, but he was very far from being a great man. The 'sarcophagus of rose-coloured granite, polished up to the brilliancy of a mirror,' upon which one came so unexpectedly in that charming solitude, was of a piece with his whole character, and gives one no exalted idea of its present inhabitant. He died on May 2, 1844, at the great age of eighty-four, and might well have observed, with the philosopher, that 'he had had enough of everything.' He seems to have been liberal enough in a certain impulsive unsystematic way. He had a sort of grim practical humour too, exemplified happily enough on one occasion, when the famous Duchess of Gordon came down to Fonthill with the intention of marrying him to one of her daughters. She remained there an entire week, magnificently entertained, and impressed to the uttermost with the sense of his enormous possessions; but he shut *himself* up in his own apartments, and would not suffer the terrible ensnarer to have a word of speech with him. He wrote a considerable number of books, all which, save *Vathek*, have perished from the memories of men. He painted many pictures; and we should think it exceedingly probable—though his biographer does not mention it—that he played upon the violin. His memoirs have a considerable interest, doubtless, but his story is a sad, and, we are glad to think, a very uncommon one.

'THE MASTER-BUILDER'S PLAN.'

THIS is the principal title of a small and handy book[*] recently published by Dr George Ogilvie, lecturer on medicine in Marischal College, Aberdeen, for the purpose of affording to students and others a readily intelligible view of those remarkable doctrines regarding the structure of animals, which, originally propounded by Oken, have latterly been worked out by our own Richard Owen and several other distinguished physiologists. The public at large know little of these doctrines, and it is a pity they should be ignorant of them, for they certainly give a most interesting peep, as we may call it, into the modes of working of the Author of Nature.

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[*] London: Longmans, 1858.

The leading principle is—that, various as are the external appearances of animals, there is traceable in them all a common and simple plan, liable to variations only. We shall not here advert to the tracings of this community as between vertebrate and articulate animals, between the molluscan and radiate types, and amongst all of these. Neither shall we go over the now comparatively familiar ground of the community so easily traced in the fish, reptile, bird, and mammalian forms of the vertebrate type. It may be more interesting, on the present occasion, to run over a few particulars of what is called the *homology of the skeleton*, from which it has resulted, that even the parts of a vertebrated animal are dependent on the same principle—namely, are but modifications of something extremely simple.

Everybody is familiar with a vertebra, or section of the back-bone of an animal. Take a typical one, and lay it down on what we may call its face; you see a hole through it, and two advanced processes forming a kind of arch below. When all the vertebræ of a back-bone are placed together in right order, the hole passing through them forms a canal for the nervous cord (commonly, but very erroneously, called the spinal marrow): so far all is familiar. Now, we come to the new doctrine, according to which the whole skeleton is but *a vertebral column with modifications*. In the central region, the processes forming the 'hæmal arch' are extended into ribs to contain the viscera. At the upper end, four vertebræ are curiously modified to form a box for the brain, an expansion of the nervous cord: thus are formed the skull and jaws, the latter being—strange to say—developments of two different vertebræ, while the bones of the nose are a vertebra by themselves. At the lower end, a vertebra is expanded into the pelvic region. One might suppose the two pair of limbs to be troublesome superfluities in this curious theory of the human fabric; but Mr Owen is at no loss about them—'he considers them as offsets from the "hæmal arch," greatly developed, indeed, to fulfil certain special ends, but not differing in nature from some small accessory bones which project from the ribs of birds; and he applies to both alike the name of diverging appendages.' The whole theory may appear fanciful to one to whom it is new; but were he to study the works of Professor Owen, and trace the particulars on which the theory is based, he would see that it looks wonderfully like a truth.

As a fact of nature, we must all deem it a profoundly interesting one. What can be more arresting to us than the character of the original divine Worker from whose hand the worlds have come? To trace how, or on what plan, or general idea, He has worked, cannot but engage our most earnest feelings. He might, of course, have worked upon a variety of plans. For instance, each separate being in nature might have been in no relation or analogy of structure to any other. The parts of each frame might have all been irrelative also. But we see this has not been His plan. He has chosen a unit of simplicity as a basis, and only been multifarious in the way of modification or adaptation. It seems as if He were economical in the use of power, but had delighted in the exercise of what in a human being is called ingenuity or *resource*. To make the same elements do for a visceral cavity in one case, and for a temple to the immortal soul in another, how infinitely curious the idea! How beautiful, also, to have made elements which were repressed in one case, spring out into such complicated forms in another; as, for instance, in the formation of the 'diverging appendages' or limbs! When we see such to be the constitution of animated beings, we may be said to gain assurance that there *was* an original and preconceived plan for all the work of that kind that was done; and, if a plan, of course a Planner or Deviser. At least it is difficult to see what other deduction can reasonably be made from the facts.

We would recommend Dr Ogilvie's little book as a convenient instructor in this subject. It is at once elegant in expression, and, as far as we can judge, scientifically accurate. It also abounds in well-drawn illustrations.

TWILIGHT.

At morn or eve, in the darkling gray,
Is the time to love, to bless, to pray:
But sweeter is eve, when sunbeams are shorn—
Then old loves ripen, and young loves are born.

At morn, at eve, in the darkling gray,
When up or back comes a straggling ray,
That, tired of wandering on with the rest,
Steals into mother Darkness's breast;
Who wraps the vagrant up in her folds,
Half hides, half shews, the treasure she holds;
And when she binds up her locks all gray
With Cold, her old bedmate, hastes away;
And when she loosens them, jet and bright,
Whispers the stars to come in for the night.

At eve or morn—but sweeter at eve—
When, for the night, the sun takes his leave,
Putting his gorgeous cloud-cap on,
As who would say: 'Good-bye—I am gone!'
Then lays him down, with eyes looking out
Through crimson canopies hanging about;
He lays him down, but is looking still
Up at the world and over the hill.
As a rose in passing from a room
Royally gifts it with rich perfume,
He gifts the world, when he goes abed,
With the twilight gray, and the western red!

And then, i' the leafy month o' the year,
All night the emerald Twilight is here,
With lingering love hanging over the bed
Where the beautiful Day and the Night lie wed—
Over them star-spangled canopies fair,
A tremulous joy is breathed through the air.
The stars!—oh, they never so beautiful seem
As when in the light of this love they gleam—
The light of this love, so holy and clear,
That comes o' nights i' the mid o' the year;
So lovely they look in the emerald sky,
One grieves to think they should ever die.

They die; the outriders of rosy dawn
Have crossed the hills and coloured the lawn—
The green-sward reddens; the red to gold,
The gold to white, changes over the wold—
The little birds chirp in the sun's broad face,
The lazy shadows lie stretched on the chase,
The silvery brooklet in melody runs,
There dance on its ripples a million suns;
And crystally clear is the voice in the sky
That bids the Twilight and Stars good-bye!

R. F.

Printed and Published by W. & R. Chambers, 47 Paternoster Row, London, and 339 High Street, Edinburgh. Also sold by William Robertson, 23 Upper Sackville Street, Dublin, and all Booksellers.

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PROFITABLE EMPLOYMENT.

THE age we live in does not enjoy the reputation it merits, neither is it always spoken of with proper respect. The general opinion seems to be that it is a go-ahead, speculative, business age, occupied by a generation the several members of which are continually racing, pushing, elbowing, and trying by all lawful, and a good many unlawful means, to pass each other. I daresay it is all very right to call it the age of railways, telegraphs, progress, civilisation, or by a hundred other distinguishing traits; but after all, these severally, and in combination, but poorly express its merits. I don't think I have ever heard it called the age of philanthropy; yet, if there be one title more than another which seems to me to express what this age really is, I think I have hit upon it above.

Should any person or persons think fit to display their incredulity on this point, either by word or gesture, let me refer them to the advertising columns of every newspaper which deserves the name. It matters little whether the sheet be the *Times*, or a penny weekly, you are sure in each and all to detect the philanthropy of the age, not merely in the bud, but fully expanded, and ready, on the smallest fostering, to spread itself over the length and breadth of the land.

I will not on this occasion allude to the retired physician, whose sands of life are nearly run out; yet who, from pure love to his kind, and irrespective of the trifling amount in postage-stamps named in his advertisement, and of course with no thought of subsequent profit of a more substantial sort, spends the last dribblets of his *earthly* existence in making known his wondrous discoveries in physic for the benefit of all whom it may concern. Neither will I introduce a variety of others whose philanthropy takes a similar course to his, and—if we may judge by their myriad advertisements—with similar success.

The particular branch of the philanthropic business to which I wish to call attention is 'the Profitable Employment' department. I must, at the outset, state, that though I intend to make such disclosures as ought to place me at the very top of the tree in the aforesaid business, I disclaim all idea of merit. I believe I should refuse a piece of plate if it were offered me in acknowledgment of the service I am about to render mankind in general; but I am not quite sure on this subject, as I have never had an opportunity of rejecting such a proposal under any circumstances, and it is said 'that no man knows what he will do until he is tried.'

I depend on my daily labour for my subsistence, so that it behoves me to employ my time as profitably as possible; yet it sometimes happens that persons with the will to work have not the power, from the simple reason, that they have no work to do; and such has been my case on more than one occasion; but did I on that account despond? Most certainly not. I read the advertisements of that branch of philanthropists who pledge themselves to insure profitable employment to persons of either sex; I saw, in every paper, that 'individuals in search of employment, either as a source of income or to fill up their leisure hours, may hear of such, by means of which from two to four pounds per week may be realised, in town or country, and by either sex—situation in life immaterial, by enclosing a stamped envelope for reply,' &c.

I think I cannot be termed egotistical, I believe I have made a very modest estimate of my talents, as, indeed, to judge from their pecuniary fruits, I have a very great right to do; yet I frankly confess that, after reading this advertisement, I felt that I had been appointed to a situation the emoluments of which would be at least one hundred per annum, with a probability of doubling that amount. Though my last day in Messrs Duff & Grubb's office was drawing to a close; though I well knew that my quarter's wages, amounting to L.15, were destined to enjoy a very brief acquaintance with my pocket, I was in easy, not to say exhilarated circumstances. The thing was simple enough: I was going to another sphere of action, with the certainty of having my salary doubled or trebled. I rejoiced that I lived in an age when one has only to expend a postage-stamp or two, and in return, any individual member of a company of disinterested advertisers will at once reveal the secret of gaining a really sumptuous income. As there could not be the slightest difficulty in the matter, I did not make an application for 'profitable employment' until I had actually turned my back on Messrs Duff & Grubb's establishment, that there might be no hinderance to my entering forthwith on the duties of my new vocation, whatever that might be. But the moment I arrived at my lodgings, I penned a letter, according to the terms of the most promising-looking advertisement; and having posted it, began—*mentally*—to spend my income in perspective. I did not wish to be extravagant in my anticipations, so I only calculated on one hundred pounds for the first year. I had hitherto lived on sixty. What luxuries would not the aforesaid additional forty purchase!—luxuries in dress, which would enable me to shine with tenfold lustre in the eyes of my beloved; luxuries in ornamental jewellery, to be devoted *to* my beloved; the luxury of a trip to the sea-side at the time when she accompanied her pupils thither, for could not I pursue my unknown occupation either in town or country? and, lastly, when another year had fled, *the priceless luxury* of taking the darling girl as my wife, and installing her in a little home of my own winning. Then I further pictured the greater proficiency in my unknown occupation which should make my *one* hundred per annum into two; and the probability that, when initiated, my beloved would, by *her* active exertions, make the two hundred into three. And should *we* not live in splendour on three hundred a year? I should not like to say how far my visions extended, or how I pictured myself the master of countless hands working at this unknown work for my behoof. I know that I indulged in the unwonted luxury of supper on the strength of my improved prospects. Two nights and the intervening day were thus delightfully spent; then came a reply, and the information that, on receipt of twenty-four postage-stamps, all the necessary particulars would be forwarded, and I should be fitted to commence this lucrative business. A slight fog seemed to come over my spirits as I read, but it could scarcely be said to damp them. A little reflection convinced me that the advertisements alone must cost a small fortune, and even philanthropists must live; so I at once enclosed the stamps in a second letter, and recommenced building castles in the air, with my beloved as joint-occupant of their apartments.

The time which elapsed before another missive came to hand hung rather heavily on my hands; not so the small remainder of my quarter's salary; the more anxious one is to spin out the cash, the faster it seems to go.

I trembled as I opened the momentous epistle which was to put me in possession of a small fortune. From the envelope I took a piece of paper about the size of a medium posting-bill, and printed on both sides; the heading was 'Profitable Employments,' in large type; and the whole appearance of the sheet, for which I had paid twenty-four postage-stamps, was singularly like a collection of recipes, such as are frequently to be found in the pages of the *Family Herald*. Having paid for them, I might, if I chose, re-advertise the secrets for my own pecuniary advantage; but I prefer proving myself superior in philanthropy even to those who dispose of this valuable information for twenty-four postage-stamps, and I shall therefore in this and every other case place the knowledge I have attained at the service of the public without thought of remuneration.

Foremost in the list of secrets stand the instructions to manufacture and prepare toilet requisites; and as space will not be available for me to insert all, I will merely give one, but will gladly furnish the remainder to any person or persons wishing to begin this manufacture, with a view to obtaining from two to four pounds per week. I think the first of the series will be the most generally useful, as it is a recipe for a preparation to promote the growth of whiskers, moustaches, &c.; and further, saith a note appended to it, it is the best for the purpose ever known: 'Simmer two ounces of beef-marrow on a slow fire in a small earthen vessel, with half an ounce of white wax. When cooling, add half an ounce of olive-oil, one of rosemary, and thirty drops of oil of nutmeg. Rub the part on which you want the hair to grow with a coarse towel before you apply the liniment; also augment the quantity and rubbing nightly.—*N.B.* This is kept a great secret by court-dressers.' Under the same heading, I have recipes for scented oil, pomatum, rondeletia-water, tooth-powder, lavender-water, and lip-salve; but after carefully perusing the whole, I am bound to confess that I have not capital to purchase materials for these articles, and that if I even had them ready-made, I should have no idea how to realise two pounds per week by the sale thereof. I therefore pass over these with a sigh, knocking down, on my way to the next set of instructions, one of those aërial castles, the erection of which had been such a pretty employment while I was waiting for the—ahem!—profitable occupation.

I next arrive at the following heading: 'A respectable and comfortable income may be obtained by adopting the art of inlaying and ornamenting papier-mâché!' But again I find, before I can commence this art, I must obtain all the most expensive colours, and twenty-one things beside, amongst which are the *papier-mâché itself*, gold-leaf, and pearl. Having done this, I am directed to sketch roughly my design on the papier-mâché! My design! I think I see it—I, who never could even copy the simplest sketch with any approximation to correctness—I, whose ships, houses, dogs, and, in fact, everything connected with my early attempts at art, were a source of amusement to all my schoolfellows. Setting aside my want of capital, the last requirement causes me to proceed abruptly, and I slip past this, and the 'Art of Painting on Glass,' for the same reasons. Castle No. 2 topples over.

Next come 'Recipes for Summer Beverages'—lemon and kali, Persian sherbet, ginger-beer powder, &c., all of which suggest to my mind only visions of stalls at street-ends, but no prospect of L.100 per annum. A recipe for furniture-polish is equally impracticable, as is also the pursuit of the various arts of dyeing, scouring, bronzing, cleaning oil-paintings, clear-starching, bonnet-cleaning, ribbon-cleaning, feather-cleaning, fur-cleaning, ham-curing, pickle-making. Equally unpromising to me seem all these, as do the arts of washing and making sweets, by which females, it is expressly said, can get a good living and save money. Neither do I think I can earn two to four pounds per week by manufacturing lucifer-matches, blacking, marking-ink, sealing-wax, ginger-beer, or pastry, or by sticking on gutta-percha soles. In short, I need not state that, after perusing the whole of my twenty-four stamps worth, I had not a single castle left standing, and that my beloved, now removed to a greater distance than ever, was the only luxury remaining to me, even in perspective.

But was I cast down at this one failure? I rejoice to say that I was not. I had five more advertisements, and I resolved on going through them all, being convinced of ultimate success. I selected a second, which promised a considerable income in return for every five shillings expended. Again I sent a stamped envelope for reply, which I duly received, and now copy for the benefit of all whom it may concern:

'SIR—In reply to your answer to my advertisement, I request a careful perusal of the enclosed, to convince you that several hundred pounds a year may be realised by very few pounds invested. As when diagrams, &c., are included in the circular, the manufacture will be found to be so simple, expeditious, and effective, that the then extremely low price of five pounds per share will be as readily obtained as is now the totally inadequate sum of five shillings, which, until the third of next month, will continue to be charged. *I have determined after that date to considerably increase the price of shares.* The information about to be given has been necessarily withheld hitherto, until the continental patents are secured, as it would have invalidated them by its *premature* disclosure. I assure you that each five-shilling share must realise a considerable sum to the holder, and which you will acknowledge when you reflect that ninety per cent. saving is effected in cost, combined with the much more important consideration of the vast improvement in manufacture, *vouched for on authority;* also, that so many important articles of wear, use, and ornament are included in this patent, and that the aggregate of the returns in the United Kingdom *alone* must amount to many millions of pounds sterling per annum.

'The reasonable estimate of profits to shareholders, after having nine-tenths deducted, will give three millions per annum to be divided amongst them, and though nine-tenths are deducted, to avoid exaggeration, such extreme caution will be more fully appreciated when the shares are raised from five shillings to five pounds; because the diagrams I am now compelled to withhold will prove that, by prodigiously extended application of this invention, I have also kept in reserve at least nineteen-twentieths of probable profits to shareholders. Not a shadow of doubt therefore exists in my mind of these five-shilling shares shortly becoming worth several hundreds of pounds each.'

I read thus far before I had the least notion what it all meant. Then I understood that the income named in the advertisement was to be obtained by buying shares in some unknown company at five shillings each, and waiting until they became worth several hundreds of pounds, when I could of course make a fortune. There is a great deal more in the circular about the impossibility of making anybody pay more than the original five shillings, and the promise that 'afterwards' all subscribers of two pounds and upwards should have a specimen of this wondrous fabric sent for inspection.

All I know beside—and this I gleaned from a great deal of print—is that the fabric is called 'Textile Mosaic;' and that a marquis's brother, a baronet, and John *Somebody*, Esq., have consented to become trustees.

I did not, however, invest my remaining two pounds, or even five shillings, in the Textile Mosaic, as I considered the term 'afterwards' much too shadowy, vague, and uncertain, and the period at which I might step into an enjoyment of these immense advantages too distant for any but a millionaire to wait for.

I had still four promises of profitable employment, and with a view to saving time, I wrote to all the four 'promisers' by the same post. In reply, number one briefly requested a call, when due explanation would be afforded, and the work exhibited. Need I say I promptly responded to the invitation; and in Regent Street—no less—I was shewn sundry specimens of Berlin wool-work, and told that if I chose to spend fifteen shillings and sixpence in learning how to do it, and to pay for materials into the bargain, I should soon be able to earn ever so much a week. I felt rather bewildered, and hinted that the work was scarcely fitted for masculine hands. The gentleman exhibiter, however, assured me that *he* invented the work, assumed an indignant air when I looked dubious, and recommended me to take home and read his prospectus. He pushed a little blue-covered book, the size of a penny *Blue Beard*, into my hand. I took it mechanically, and turned to the door, when I was 'brought to' by a sharp request for twopence, the price of said book, *and I paid it.*

I *must* give a brief extract from its contents. The inventor—Mr Toohey—after thanking the ladies of the nobility and gentry for their patronage, begs 'that all who have not yet been made acquainted with his new patterns for ladies's needlework, will at once be aroused, and assist to arrest the fructifying stream of British gold that annually finds its way to the continent for mere patterns for ladies's needle-work. The patriotism of the British lady,' says he, 'has been known for centuries, and during the late war, the numerous articles of comfort manufactured by their delicate hands was extensively felt by the valiant soldier in the frozen trenches of Sebastopol. Also the immense sums which have been raised from time to time in bazaars, is a further proof of the extensive property which might be realised, but partly lies dormant, on account of the great expense of Berlin patterns. The inventor further flatters himself he has done much to dispel the accusation of national plagiary, and hopes to obtain universal patronage,' &c., &c.

Number two requiring a personal call, I turned my weary feet in another direction, and was informed, that if I would spend ten shillings in learning to colour maps, I should—'provided my work suited'—be employed. It was to no purpose that I offered to prove myself an adept in the art without any instruction; I must disburse the half-sovereign before my work *could* suit; so I reluctantly turned my steps towards Tottenham Court Road, to have an interview with 'number three,' whose answer had requested a call.

The advertisement in this case was particularly promising, for it stated 'that a certain art would be taught for a trifle, and that constant employment could be given at a rate of remuneration varying from two to three pounds per week.' As I reached the place, a young lady, with a face wonderfully expressive of disappointment, was issuing from it. She looked at me, then, to my great surprise, hesitated, as if she would speak; so I anticipated her by respectfully inquiring whether she were the proprietress of, or connected with that establishment. I further tendered an apology for asking the question, saying I had walked some distance for the purpose of speaking with that, to me, unknown individual, and was fearful of missing my chance, when I saw her emerge from the doorway of the house whither I was bound. She gave a sigh as she answered that she had just paid her last visit to the place, and deeply regretted that she had ever seen it. I will give the explanation I obtained in a few words. Like myself, she had seen the advertisement respecting 'profitable employment,' and in the hope of earning the 'two or three pounds per week,' had learned the art—leather-work—but certainly not for a trifle, since it had already cost her ten pounds. At first, she had been told two guineas would cover all the expense, and that, as soon as she had attained proficiency, she would be regularly employed. But, somehow, her work never gave satisfaction, and she had been induced to go on paying for instruction, until, weary and hopeless, she had now resolved to give up all further attempts to please those whose promises were plainly made only to induce continued outlay. She shewed me her last work, which, to my eyes, appeared perfect of its kind, and added, that having herself felt bitterly disappointed, she trusted she should prevent my being so; then she said, 'Good-day,' and I, after thanking her, wended homewards.

Alas for 'my beloved' and me! There was not one castle left. All my aërial manors had departed like what indeed they were, 'the baseless fabric of a vision.' I, however, tried the last advertiser on the list, and found that if I substituted the art of japanning for that of ornamental leather-work, the story I have just told would express all, save that the mistress who professed to teach it had herself such a careworn face that my pity for her outbalanced my disappointment. Poor thing, thought I, a young woman who has to struggle single-handed has a harder battle to fight than I. God help her!

I must own that these advertisements have two sides; and I am driven to conclude that the advertisers, although doubtless philanthropic, have also an eye, distressingly keen, to their own interests.

RECENT VISITS TO JAPAN.*

Nothing supplies more excitement to the imagination than the unvisited parts of the earth. Why is it that they remain unknown to us? Why have travellers not gone thither? Is it because the wayfarers of these days lack courage, or because some natural or artificial obstacles lie in the way? To employ the ordinary language of life, some countries appear to be unlucky in this respect. Thrown by nature out of the great highways of commerce and war, possessing an ungenial climate, or inhabitants more than usually ferocious, they are neglected through accident, contempt, or fear, and remain puzzles to geographers.

Japan cannot be included in this category, since it has often been visited, often described, and, oftener still, glanced at, in general voyages or descriptions of the east. Marco Polo, the greatest name among modern travellers, revealed the existence of this empire to the western world, which, in his days, was rendered so incredulous through ignorance, that priests and friars beset his death-bed, beseeching him to recant the accounts he had published of Eastern Asia, which they looked upon as pure fictions. Japan then seemed to retreat into darkness, in which it lay shrouded till the middle of the sixteenth century, when a Portuguese vessel was driven upon its shores by a tempest. This, which happened in 1542, is commonly regarded as the discovery of Japan. For more than fifty years, the countrymen of Vasco de Gama enjoyed a monopoly of the commerce of this mighty group, and, chiefly with the riches they thus obtained, built the magnificent city of Macao. The exportation of the precious metals had not been then prohibited, and one small craft, the last of its class that quitted the Japanese shores, is said to have sailed away with three hundred tons of pure gold on board.

Subsequently, Japan, like China, became practically closed against Europeans, for the exception made in favour of the Dutch is rather nominal than real. A handful of individuals from Frogland, imprisoned on an artificial island in the harbour of Nagasaki, carry on a miserable trade with the natives, submitting to all sorts of indignities for the sake of gain. It was foreseen that our recent wars with China would almost necessarily break up the voluntary blockade in which the Japanese had placed themselves; and America, France, and England, by the employment of a species of menacing diplomacy, have at length succeeded in overcoming the obstinacy of the Japanese government. Now, therefore, by degrees, the various islands of the group will be visited by civilised nations, and brought within the sphere of our knowledge. Every age has its own taste. The travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were almost exclusively political, and looked upon every other topic as only so far interesting as it had reference to the extension of empire. When they visited any new land, therefore, they scarcely noticed whether it was flat or mountainous, covered with woods, or bare as the palm of your hand. In the eighteenth century, commerce absorbed the thoughts of all wayfaring and seafaring men; while, in our own day, a little too much deference, perhaps, is paid to the imagination. When you have read, for example, through a whole new volume of travels, you scarcely remember anything except the creeks and coves, the rocky promontories, the richly wooded valleys, the cascades, the winding streams, the delicious atmosphere, and the blue sky. Sometimes it escapes you that there are inhabitants in this terrestrial paradise, or if you are brought accidentally to recognise their existence, you only think of them as creatures that live on dew, or the perfume of flowers.

The writer of the *Two Journeys*, which we fancy should rather have been called Two Voyages to Japan, is not exclusively picturesque. He certainly possesses a talent for description, and places a series of very striking pictures before the minds of his readers; but he likewise makes the most of other interesting subjects, as eating, drinking, dressing, bathing, and worshipping idols. Unluckily, he did not see very much of the country; but of what he did see, he conveys a lively impression. We were at first almost inclined to imagine that he meant to become the rival of Sir Thomas More, and present us with a new Utopia; but as we proceeded, evidence that the Japanese really do belong to the ordinary race of Adam was supplied, though somewhat reluctantly. Mynheer Caron, a Dutch traveller, who was once famous, was attacked in Japan by an affection of the heart, and to remove it, took a native wife. We expected an account of a similar catastrophe in the present volumes, so eloquent is the writer on the beauty and perfections of the Japanese women. He does not even seem to discover anything unsightly in jet-black teeth, eyebrows denuded of hair, or eyes dipping towards the nose like those of a fox. His tolerant imagination finds, in fact, beauty in all this; and though our theory of what is lovely in woman differs essentially from his, we admire the philosophical spirit in which he seeks to combat European prejudices against saffron complexions, purple lips, ebony grinders, and a forehead without eyebrows.

But a real talent for description is a somewhat rare gift, and this traveller really possesses it. Through his pages, we for the first time obtain a true notion of that part of Japan which he visited. The country, under his pencil, comes out fresh, dewy, and picturesque before the eye, with its cedars, its camphor laurels, its tapering volcanoes, its winding valleys, its long sweeps of undulating plains.

In the month of July 1856, he enters the harbour of Simoda, and thus delineates its distinguishing features: 'Near the mouth of the bay was presented a beautifully indented cove, the entrance to which was nearly hidden by an islet, bearing an aspect of the most inviting and luxuriant repose, covered with slim yet stately trees, rich in blossom and in verdure, and, as seen from a distance, more suggestive of the idea of some gigantic bouquet than solid land. The surrounding hills, rising panorama-like one beyond the other, were clothed and terraced with cultivated crops, and a profusion of flowery vegetation, and thick overhanging woods; while here and there, far as the eye could carry, clumps of trees, resembling fortifications in their compact density, lent diversity to the pleasing prospect.'

Close to the town, they found a small colony of Russians, whom shipwreck, for the time, had located in Japan. Through generosity or fear, the natives had entertained them hospitably, and assigned them a temple for their abode. As far as mere manners are concerned, the subjects of the czar are much better qualified to win golden opinions in this Buddhist empire, than the honest but somewhat rough and boisterous mariners of the United States. All foreigners alike, however, considerably perplex the officials. They know as well as possible that nearly all the inhabitants of the empire are desirous of cultivating the good-will of strangers, from doing which they are only prevented by laws which are no longer applicable to the age in which we live. The treaties with Great Britain, America, and France, though still constructed with reference to the ancient exclusive principles, will inevitably introduce a deluge of foreigners into the country, and either result in the entire freedom of trade and intercourse, or lead to a war. Travellers will break bounds, wander beyond the tracks prescribed to them, and, through curiosity or obstinacy, force themselves into society; each government will protect its own subjects, and there will be constant bickering, unless, by wise and liberal regulations, strangers are suffered to move whithersoever they please, so long as they conduct themselves with propriety. The testimony of all those who have visited any part of the group corroborates the opinion that the Europeans themselves are less anxious than the Japanese to break down the barrier of exclusiveness. The narrative before us goes far to demonstrate the friendly disposition of the middle and lower orders. Some of the officials having paid a visit to the officers of the American sloop-of-war, the latter immediately prepared, nothing loath, to return the compliment. 'We landed,' says the writer, 'between Kagasaki and the sea, and followed the beach until we reached the outskirts of the village, where we were quite taken by surprise at the number of pretty girls and children that emerged from their houses to obtain a sight of us. They exhibited an anxious curiosity and interest on our behalf, which was quite flattering. The news of our approach flew on in advance of us, so that our path was kept lined with the beauty of the place, each damsel with her fancifully painted umbrella overhead, and her stilt-like sandals under foot. There was a degree of sprightliness about their manners, and of sober intelligence about their looks, which, at once ingenuous and kind, denoted the unruffled temper and amiability which I subsequently found to be the universal possession of the women of Japan.'

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* *Two Journeys to Japan in* 1856 *and* 1857. By Kinahan Cornwallis. With numerous Illustrations, from Drawings from Life by the Author. 2 vols. London: Newby. 1859.

If travellers must run into extremes, we prefer the excess of praise and admiration to the excess of censure. Cynical persons nowhere find either beauty or virtue, the basis of their interpretation being supplied from within. Without pretending to endorse this glowing eulogium on the Japanese ladies, from which experience might necessitate some drawback, we subjoin a portrait of an individual young woman, merely premising that the writer had been many months at sea, while the last women he had beheld were those of China, with deformed feet, tottering gait, overfed figures, and sickly yellow faces. 'Passing along a street running parallel with the beach, and formed of two rows of picturesque two-storied wooden houses, plastered over with a stone-like cement, the lintel or doorpost of each being surmounted by a Buddha's head, or some such device intended as a charm, I saw a young girl standing, fan in hand, at an open door, reading. She was simply clad in a loose crape, half-petticoat, half-dressing-gown sort of dress, reaching as far down as the ankles, and bound by a sash of yellow silk round the waist. The feet, which were small and beautifully formed, rested on the common high straw sandals of the country. Over this dress, which left the bosom partly uncovered, she wore a light cream-coloured open jacket of a muslin texture, with wide sleeves extending a little below the elbow; her soft black hair was beautifully drawn back from off the forehead, and bound in a peculiar cluster at the back of the head, where it was held by two gold pins, one of great length, and with a scorpion-like device attached to it, and which moved to and fro with every motion of its fair wearer. The complexion was bright and pale, much more so than the Chinese; her features animated and expressive, and her teeth white and as finely formed as her entire figure. By the latter, I saw that she was a virgin, the invariable Japanese custom being that, on the marriage of every female, the teeth are dyed black, and, in some cases, the eyebrows shaven off.'

The writer is in error respecting the shaving, since the hairs of their eyebrows are plucked out by the root. These absurd customs, which, with some variations, prevail throughout the whole eastern archipelago, are of a piece with painting the cheeks bright red and dyeing the lips purple.

One of the first things which strike the traveller in Japan is the people's extreme cleanliness. All Asiatic nations are given to this virtue more or less, but it seems to reach its culminating-point among the Japanese. From this, as well as from most other things related by travellers, we conclude that this people will glide easily into the circle of civilisation, provided their laws can be so far modified as to admit of uninterrupted intercourse with the citizens of other states. In quickness and intelligence, in patience and the power of imitation, they appear to be superior to the Chinese, and in freedom from prejudice, to all other orientals. We say, appear to be, because as yet we are scarcely entitled to form positive opinions respecting them. With all the information as yet supplied to us, we only stand upon the threshold of their system of laws and manners, religion and civil polity. Very much may lie beyond our view, which, being thoroughly known, may modify our views either for better or worse. The interior of their country is a *terra incognita;* the interior of their social life is so also. We accept, of course, the testimony of eye-witnesses when they depose to the cleverness, the flexibility, and superior ingenuity of the Japanese; but we are at a loss how to reconcile with any ideas of high intelligence their dreary and monotonous system of government, which seems to have succeeded in casting all the minds of the country after one pattern, and rendering every man, intellectually speaking, like his neighbour. All their towns, temples, houses, junks, hats, coats, and tea-pots are constructed upon the same plan. There is nothing individual among them. Every official above a certain rank wears two swords and a lackered hat; every official below that rank, down to some arbitrary point in the governmental hierarchy, wears one sword; and the remainder, down to the populace, must content themselves with no sword at all. Again, among the higher orders, form, ceremony, etiquette, absorb half the energies of life. A man has to traverse a whole forest of mummeries to arrive at a cup of tea; grimaces, manœuvres, genuflections, bobbing, bowing, courtesying, beset the unlucky individual whose fate it is to approach persons of exalted rank; and when he has gone through his day's work, we fancy he must feel as flat as a tea-tray.

But let us hear our traveller's opinion respecting the stuff of which the Japanese were originally made. 'After breakfast,' he says, 'several of us went on shore again in one of the ship's boats. On gaining the beach, I observed a little fellow tracing something in the sand with a sharp-pointed stick. I went up to him, and recognised the child I had shaken by the hand on the previous day, and whom I had endeavoured to teach the art of numbers after the English style, seeing that counting appeared to be about the most prominent feature in the government of his country. I had tried to make him repeat after me one, two, three, and so on, up to ten, and before leaving him had written in pencil on a slip of paper the several figures. And here he was, slip in hand, now deeply engrossed in transferring them to the sand. One, two, three, and the first stroke of the next figure were already represented on the Japanese beach, and he was evidently resolved to persevere till he accomplished the ten; moreover, the figures were quickly and accurately formed. I made a sign for him to continue scribbling; in five minutes more, he had the ten figures traced out in a straight line, and all as true to my own writing, excepting a little exaggeration in point of size, as was possible. I looked at his graceful frame and bright sparkling eyes, and began to conceive a high idea of Japanese brains.'

How far it may be allowable to seize upon a national custom, and illustrate it by a fictitious anecdote, we do not pretend to determine; but we feel persuaded that our author has taken the liberty to insert a little incident, in order to shew of how very little value their brains are to the Japanese—we mean under certain circumstances. In the land of Brahma, when two people quarrel about a piece of ground, he who has most malignity, as well as fondness for his family in him, takes a knife, walks deliberately to his neighbour's house, and planting himself right before his door, maliciously cuts his own throat. What, you may ask, does he gain by this? He gains his lawsuit, for the disputed land inevitably becomes the property of his family. A similar aberration of intellect prevails among the Japanese. Upon the least possible provocation, a gentleman will seize upon his sword, and rip up his own bowels. Very frequently, whole families are ordered by the government to do this deed upon themselves; and they obey at once.

The poor Japanese, if any one chooses to offer him an indignity, must scarify himself wherever he may happen to be, or else consent to live among his suicidal fellow-countrymen a disgraced and lost man. Our author relates, that a party from the sloop proceeding one day on an excursion into the country, was followed by two officers of the government, who performed this duty under strict compulsion. Our author and his American friends were thrown into a savage mood by the occurrence. The sailing-master turned back, and closely confronted the two. He took hold of one of them by the shoulders, turned his face towards the bamboo edifice, and gave him a slight push in that direction. The two Japanese persisting in coming on, the Yankee took his man again by the shoulders, 'and performed, with his heavy expedition-boot, a violent ceremony, which is usually considered anything but flattering or agreeable throughout the rest of the world, but in Japan was an insult that, I might safely aver, had never been committed before, and which could alone be avenged by death. Without, therefore, making the slightest attempt at retaliation on the body of his adversary, he unsheathed his chief sword, which, beautifully burnished, flashed for an instant in the sunlight; the Yankee meanwhile extricated his revolver from its hiding-place; it was needless, for at two easy strokes—two gentle slashes of that keen-edged weapon, performed in an instant one across the other like the letter X—he had disembowelled himself, and fell a swiftly dying man. As he reached the ground, he cast up his eyes at his adversary, and seeing him standing near, apparently with no intention of following his example, he expressed the most fearful agony I had ever beheld. We were all filled with dismay at this strange event, while the brother-official surveyed us threateningly with looks of the most intense horror. "He expects you to kill yourself in like manner, and with the same sword," said the Sandwich Islander. The Yankee muttered out something to the effect that he was not such a fool. Meanwhile, the distortions of the dying man were painful to look upon; the other officer motioned us away, and went down on his knees beside the wounded body; and before he rose, a few seconds afterwards, the man was dead.'

Assuming this story not to be a fiction, and regarding it as an example of the way in which western sailors behave in foreign countries, we can experience little surprise at the anxiety of the Japanese government to exclude strangers from its territories. Other instances of the undisciplined behaviour of the officers and crew of this sloop, related by Mr Cornwallis, tend to explain and justify the hostile sentiments with which orientals regard their uncouth visitors from the west. All nations attach to the objects connected with their worship ideas of peculiar sanctity; and no greater offence can be offered them than the treating of their images and idols with disrespect. Near Hakodadi, however, the Americans found a cave, sacred to the sea-god of the Japanese, and containing in its dark recesses a small chapel, with a statue of the divinity. The adventure in this cave is told in a wild and exciting manner—the waves dash and foam—a furious current sets in between the rocks; the excavation spreads, and branches out beneath the superincumbent mountain; and all the characteristics of the scene tend strongly to impress the imagination. It would have reminded the reader of a passage in the *Arabian Nights*, but for the low vice of the visitors, which led them, through some contemptible propensity which we hardly know how to designate, to plunder the shrine.

Mr Cornwallis's estimate of the Japanese character is much too exalted. There exists on the face of the earth no people of more sanguinary and unsparing ferocity. Superstition is everywhere cruel, everywhere degrading to humanity; but nowhere do the annals of fanaticism exhibit traits so monstrous, barbarities so diabolical, cruelty so loathsome and hideous, as we discover in the dark chronicles of the Japanese.

Mr Cornwallis's volume is full of amusement. The author did not see much of the country; but what he did see, he has graphically described. He possesses the art of letting in light upon all the topics which he undertakes to discuss; and though we are often constrained to reject his opinions and conclusions, and to wish that his education had been a little more carefully attended to, we admire his natural abilities, and generally approve of the use to which he has put them. It requires considerable effort to look at Japan and its inhabitants through the heavy old Dutch and German travellers, and the more modern Russians and Swedes supply little more assistance. What we now want is a series of original observers, who will delineate what they see, and confine themselves to that. Mr Cornwallis should have made the discovery that the day has gone by for compilations from Maffei and Kæmpfer of a history which even in them possesses very little charm. All the original part of his work, however, is lively, graphic, and full of interest.

THE WATERING-PLACE HUSBAND.

'So, Laura is to be the fortunate woman after all!' said a bright-eyed damsel, running up towards a knot of young ladies, seated in a remote corner of a very large room, talking in whispers, and glancing sometimes towards the door; and thrusting herself between two of them, she put an arm round each fair neck, gazed into the one face, then into the other, and so by turns at the whole group, asking with her exquisite arch eyes, and a sort of prim smile that played round her lovely full lips, better than words could have done: 'How do you feel, and you, and you?' She paused for a reply, but none being vouchsafed, she added, ludicrously articulating every syllable: 'She is to be married to Mr Thompson next month.'

'And how do *you* know?' said one young lady, rather in a pettish tone.

'She told me so herself,' was the reply. 'I met her this moment on the stairs, flushed and trembling, but evidently exulting in her triumph; and I wished her joy from the bottom of my heart.'

'And so do I,' echoed one or two of the group. A very starched, rather elderly young lady, remarked there was no accounting for taste. Another thought he might have done better, with a glance at some of the handsomest girls present, and a good long inward stare at herself; while the one who had tried hardest to get him, wondered how any girl could marry such a stiff, awkward man. Besides, who was he? If he had been well connected, he would have been only too glad to have boasted of it. Then he was only a city man! Not even rich, either. And such a name! She could not endure these common names; if it were for nothing else, *she* never could have married him. At which declaration, expressive glances were interchanged. One young lady coughed violently; another played a tune on the table; two others, who were seated rather behind the speaker, raised their eyebrows to each other in that peculiar manner understood to be a substitute for the words 'Did you ever?'

It was on a fine morning, in the middle of September, in rather a second-rate hotel at Leamington, that the above scene took place. A sociable enough party had been assembled there for three weeks; that is, the elder members were quite satisfied, and the younger had nothing tangible to complain of. They had the usual amount of walking, riding, dancing, quarrelling, and jealousies to amuse them; but there was a want of excitement, that daily craving of the young, and the more brisk among them voted the whole thing decidedly slow. What, then, must have been the general exhilaration, the whispered conjectures, the flutterings, the glancings, when it had become known, about a week before, that two gentlemen had arrived—young gentlemen, for they were both certainly under thirty-five—and that one of them had at once proceeded to throw out, in an easy, indifferent manner, hints as to the condition and intentions of the other. The friends were Mr Fortescue and Mr Thompson. The former, in spite of his aristocratic name, seemed to have no condition or intentions of his own. He was simply Mr Thompson's friend; he belonged to that class who neither have nor desire a position, and who enjoy life all the more that they do not seek to make any permanent appropriation of its component parts—birds of passage, who descend to peck here and there any sort of morsel, and who live a sort of cuckoo-life without any nest of their own. He had the easy, assured air of the race of which he was an accomplished specimen. Mr Thompson, on the contrary, was stiff, formal, and silent. You could not call him awkward, but he had the air of a man on his good behaviour, and as if an explosion might take place if he should at any time forget his lesson. He committed no overt act that could be called ungentlemanly, and yet you would have demurred to calling him a gentleman. He was rather tall and stout; regular enough features, a red and white complexion, a sort of nervous twitching of the eyes, and dark, strong, curly hair. His tailor had fitted him so tightly, that he seemed a prisoner in his own clothes; for instead of being a subsidiary affair, the clothing was the most important part of the man—as if Mr Thompson had entered into a signed and sealed compact with his tailor not to dishonour the work of his hands. To puff the wearer into a state of equality with these exquisite habiliments, was the special mission of Mr Fortescue—a mission he fulfilled to perfection. Nothing was overdone; he only said enough to invite inquiry, and to set the whole table into a frenzy of curiosity. If a person of importance were named, he would say: 'I don't know him, but I believe my friend Thompson does,' without appealing to him, although he was close by. He would begin to say something about his friend Thompson's house or possessions, and then slide off to another subject in a careless, dreamy way. If the party stopped in their rambles to look at a plant, he said: 'It's the same, I think, Thompson, you have in your' ——, then drop his voice, so that the last words were inaudible. One young lady declared it was 'garden at Kensington,' while another was quite sure it was 'at Camden Town.' Thus gently and warily hoisted into notice, and covered with a delicate veil of mystery, it was surprising how well Mr Thompson enacted the small part that remained for him. From the hands of his tailor he had passed into those of Mr Fortescue, who served him up with derivations to the assembled guests, who again perfected him according to the usual system of favourable prepossessions. His stiffness was dignity, his awkwardness modesty. His silence shewed reflection, the nervous twitching of the eye indicated a quick sensibility, a slightly provincial accent gave him an additional interest —it sounded so foreign. Not but that there still remained some smouldering embers of doubt and distrust—they were only embers, however, and easily quenched. Why did Mr Thompson never say anything about Mr Fortescue? Fortescue was decidedly an aristocratic name, and Thompson as decidedly plebeian. Yet Mr Fortescue never spoke of his connections, nor of high people in general but with some reference to Mr Thompson. Then Mr Thompson, only a city man, did not appear at all proud of his association with this easy-dashing, of course west-end man. All this was puzzling; but then it was the very life and soul of a watering-place to be puzzled. Was it not just for want of being puzzled that the party were so dull and slow before this new arrival? Concerning whom, whatever was unaccountable was held to prove entire honesty and simplicity, and the absence of any desire of help from borrowed feathers. It certainly went to confirm this conclusion, that Mr Fortescue never propounded Mr Thompson as a rich man, but only as one in easy circumstances. His business was in the city; but whenever there threatened any too curious inquiry as to its nature, Mr Fortescue seemed to soar into some sublime alpine altitude of thought, far above vulgar mortal ken, or suddenly recollected an amusing story he must tell, or a letter he must reply to; so that at the end of four days, all that was certainly known of Mr Thompson was, that he was a city man—his business was in the city, that he had a villa in the vicinity of London, and that the world revolved for him at the pleasant rate of L.800 a year; to which was added, it was vaguely hinted, a sort of supplementary motion in its own axis, sometimes swelling the amount to L.1000, or even more, and that he was in search of a fair partner to share all these advantages. He was, then, no great match, still he was a match—a comfortable match; and as soon as this was voted, his became the simple part of a live automaton, who permitted others to pull his strings. For what so easy as to be flirted with, to receive fair and flattering words, to be danced, and sung, and played, and dressed at; to reply to the unasked question: 'Which of us will you have?' But Mr Thompson was not to get off so easily. He had come from London for a wife, and nothing was further from his thoughts than falling in love. What's love to a city man, or he to love, whose vocation in life is to buy and to sell, and to get gain? In Mr Thompson's visions of a watering-place wife, the tender and romantic had certainly found no place. That imaginative race called poets, however, whose sole art consists in always seeing something where others see nothing, love to assert that there are wonderful depths in the heart of every man, if you can only find a line long enough to sound them; and that even city men have hearts as well stored with precious metal as their purses. Mr Thompson may have heard—we know not whether from the poet or the anatomist—that men have hearts, but was ignorant of the precise position of his own, till it was suddenly pierced by a dart from the eyes of the charming little fairy mentioned in the outset. She was one of those provokingly attractive creatures who cannot choose but make foils of the rest of their sex. She had that exquisite, easy grace which defies at once description and imitation. She was grave and gay, humorous and pathetic. Any dress became her, every situation suited her. The songs she declared she could not sing, or had forgotten, went off as well as the last practised one. The men writhed under her charms, and the women, except a very few, acknowledged their power. It was a great treat to see Mr Thompson in love: were we to attempt to describe it, we could only ask our readers to fancy the few signs of independent existence he formerly emitted, either totally suspended, or diverging into convulsive and grotesque forms. He made wrong or no replies to the simplest questions, and would come out with short volleys of speech without coherence. He sometimes knocked over everything that came in his way, and sometimes sat at table for an hour after the company were gone, intently studying, no doubt, the pattern of the table-cloth. He never was detected either speaking to or looking at his enchantress; but we have our suspicions that the curious twitching and winking, now in a state of great activity, concealed that hateful, furtive art of looking out at the corners of the eyes. When she sang, he shrank into the uttermost corner of the room, and sat with his back to her, looking like a criminal suffering under some exquisite form of torture. How he lashed himself up into a sufficiently demonstrative state, to propose to her, will remain for ever a mystery. She made no revelation. The tradition ran, however, that in his desperation, he did ask her three several times, and that it was only after the last refusal he found himself the accepted lover of Laura Crompton, the second of three daughters of a small proprietor in an adjoining county—a fine girl of the second water. The fun was all over then!—there was to be no more perplexity or excitement. Mr Thompson had come for a wife, and having supplied himself, he must retire and leave an open field. The very next day, the whole family of Crompton departed, and with them Mr Thompson. What became of Mr Fortescue, it is not for us to divulge; doubtless he went to pursue his friendly art elsewhere.

It was soon announced that the wedding was to take place in a fortnight, for watering-place attachments are plants of hot-house growth, forced on by high-pressure flues, and brook not long exposure to the free outward air of heaven; and thus it came to pass, that on a sunny morning in October, in the parish church of S——, 'this man and this woman' performed the last act of their masquerade by kneeling before God's high altar, and swearing to love each other till death did them part. This man, because it was part of his scheme of life to have a wife; and she, because two of her companions, just her age, had been married a year ago, and because she had often heard her father—looking sometime at his daughters as if they had become less attractive to him, because they were not more attractive to other men—say that a woman's best chance was over at twenty-four, and she was past twenty-three.

If it be true that invisible spirits are perpetually hovering around us, luring and tempting to good or evil, how, within many a holy precinct, must the demons of discord and deceit crowd around such strangely thrust together pairs, 'to have and to hold' them in their grasp, gibbering and grinning and grimacing in their fiendish triumph, while the pure spirits of love and truth turn sorrowing away, and veil their faces with their wings! These twain, laboriously simulating to be one, leave the church and drive off, followed by the envious gaze of expectant brides, and the noisy shouts of village children, and are whirled to the bride's late home, where she sits with a doubtful feeling of her own identity, or what it all means, at her father's board; and after the usual din and clatter, the flow of soul following on the flow of champagne, Mr Hendon, the oldest friend of Mr Crompton, burly and rosy, but with an air of dignity that shewed he was rising with the occasion, called for a bumper to the health and happiness of the newly wedded pair, who were evidently, he informed the company, made for each other: she was amiable and accomplished; and as for Mr Thompson, it was very little he could say of him; but this he could with truth say, that he possessed the esteem of every one who had the good-fortune to know him; then bursting the fetters of dull prose, he quoted, with deep emotion, some lines about the spirits of true lovers not being parted even by death itself.

A short honey-fortnight was spent in dawdling through the country on the way to London, for Mr Thompson's business in the city could brook no further absence of its chief, and had he not already been gone five weeks? What honey might yet be remaining in the moon's wane must be sucked at Kensington; so thither they went, and on a cold, clear, starlight night in October, Laura arrived at her future home; and a most pleasant one it turned out to be, with its blazing fires and bright new furniture, amongst which were many tasteful articles, pleasant to the eye, and suited to the tastes and occupations of woman. Mr Thompson left early in the morning for the city, and did not return till late in the evening to dinner, when Laura hoped business had gone on well in his absence, and he hoped she had spent a pleasant day; they were quite disposed to be pleased with each other, and everything seemed turning out 'for better;' for at the end of a few weeks, Mr Thompson thawed and developed amazingly; became more at home with himself, and rather talkative, made quite a kind, good average husband in a plain unromantic way; and this pair who had found themselves one in such a sleight-of-hand manner, bade fair to add one to the many contradictions which wayward practice every day flourishes in the face of sound theory. When it began to dawn on Laura that she was really uprooted from the parent soil, when she began to try to realise the condition into which she had been whirled, thoughts of inquiry also naturally arose in her mind. Where were Mr Thompson's relatives? Why had none of them been to see her? Where even was that truest of friends, Mr Fortescue? When she would have given audible vent to those inquiries, Mr Thompson always evaded them; she did not wish to be too curious, but glossed the matter over to herself; when she pressed him too nearly, she drew from him such a sad account of removals to a better world, and to remote parts of this one, that she was quite sorry she had so wounded his feelings. Laura was in no want of society, for her own friends and relatives were always welcomed by her husband; they might remain for days or weeks, it was all the more agreeable to him. She often walked out to meet him on his return from the city, sometimes as far as the east end of Piccadilly, sometimes further. One day when they met, she began to inquire into the precise nature of his business, but he interrupted her by some trifling remark in an embarrassed tone, and with an increased twitching of the eyes. Thus ended her first attempt; and the second, for which he was evidently prepared, only elicited that it was a sort of commerce she could not understand, even were he to explain it. In what street? was her next question. He stammered out a name of which she had never heard; but then there were so many streets in the city, this was no wonder. So all passed off, and time flowed on again in a quiet current. It was about three months after the wedding, and Laura had not only little to complain of, but she had materials for happiness, and was happy, and might have continued so, but for her perverse and womanly weakness for knowing 'all about it.' She was seized with such an uncontrollable fit of curiosity, that she resolved to be mistress of her husband's secret. She would follow him into the city; she would see the place where he carried on his business; and if no outward sign emitted its nature, she could mark the spot for future and wary inquiry; nay, what would hinder her, unknown as she must be, to learn the truth from some one on the spot? Her resolution was taken.

The very next morning, after talking gaily with her husband, and bidding him good-bye when he set out for the city, she hurried on her shawl and bonnet, adding a thick veil, and in an instant was on the road in secure sight of the poor unconscious Mr Thompson. What if he should call a cab, or jump into an omnibus? She knew he sometimes rode, but most frequently walked. What if he should stop to speak to some friend or acquaintances? She must, then, tack about, which would be awkward; but nothing is observed in London, and then Mr Thompson had no friends or acquaintances. For a time, he walked at an easy moderate rate, which gave no trouble to his partner, but as he approached the city, he so quickened his pace that poor Laura was ready to sink with fatigue. Heated and flurried, she sometimes lost sight of him, and then would make a rush forward, till she found herself almost touching him. When he got to the most crowded parts of the Strand, he sometimes slackened his pace, then quickened it, casting stealthy glances around him, which made Laura draw back and double her veil. At length, on coming to the corner of one of the many streets branching off from the Strand, Mr Thompson suddenly darted into it, and disappeared within a door that seemed to have been open to receive him; then instantly closed again, after the manner of doors in a pantomime. Overstrained by the hot pursuit, the tension of mind caused by her frenzy of curiosity, and the fear of being discovered in such a discreditable situation, Laura would have sunk to the ground, had she not leaned for support against the wall of a house nearly opposite. There she stood in a sort of blank stupor, for ten minutes, it might be twenty, when the door at which Mr Thompson had entered slowly opened, and three male figures came forth. One of them, though altered and shabby-looking, she instantly recognised as Mr Fortescue, the kind Leamington friend, who had so successfully puffed Mr Thompson up to the pitch matrimonial. The second her eyes fell on, she had never seen before, she felt sure. These two supported between them a wretched figure maimed and blind. He seemed to have no legs, or at least she saw nothing under the knees. The arms hung so loose, it seemed a doubtful case whether the necessary friction in giving support might not cause a total rupture. She was about to examine what, at the distance, appeared to be a scar or mark of some kind on the pale face, when the face itself—— O horror! No, it could not be! Laura gasped for breath—her brain reeled—she turned away her eyes as if she could turn away the truth; for all other signs of identity might have deceived her; but the strange nervous twitching of the eyes, evidently produced by simulating blindness, revealed the awful fact! It was her husband! Mr Thompson was a beggar!

RESULTS OF THE ART TREASURES EXHIBITION.

The Executive Committee of the Art Treasures Exhibition have just completed a formal statement of their doings, difficulties, and success in the management of that great undertaking. This document will, by the time this paper is published, be presented to the public; and among much that chiefly regards those who were actively engaged in promoting the Exhibition, it contains many curious statistics, and other matters of general interest. As a permanent record of the way in which the thing was carried out, from the birth of the idea, in the first instance, to the very clearing of the ground on which the building stood, it will doubtless prove a valuable assistance to any persons who may hereafter engage in works of a similar character. A sketch of the origin and contents of the Exhibition, with an architectural description of the palace in which it was contained, was furnished by this Journal shortly after the opening ceremonial; it will not, therefore, be necessary for us to refer again to what most of our readers saw for themselves; but we may just state, as a fact illustrating the energy of the conductors of the enterprise, that within the short space of ten months from the time when the builders first broke ground, a palace covering 18,000 square yards had been raised and decorated; and more than 16,000 objects of art asked for, granted, packed, and carried from all parts of the kingdom, had been unpacked, and placed in their proper department and order.

The financial results of the enterprise are satisfactory, since it was not a speculation, and since it was no part of the plan of the projectors to realise a profit. It was not found necessary to trouble those 109 'men of Manchester,' who made themselves jointly responsible to the amount of L.72,000, to meet any deficiency in the receipts; the balance-sheet, as now presented, shews a sum in hand of L.304, 14s. 4d. This result is favourable by comparison with previous exhibitions, all of which, except the Great Exhibition of 1851, entailed serious pecuniary loss upon the conductors; and in that instance, there were many circumstances which gave it a monetary advantage over its successor in the north—such as a free grant of land for the building, public donations, government aid, and the payment of packing and carriage expenses by the contributors themselves. In the case of the Manchester Exhibition, the outlay amounted to nearly three times the original estimate; yet, if the undertaking had been carried out in a less liberal and comprehensive spirit, no doubt the result, in cash and otherwise, would have been a failure. The total amount received was L.110,588, 9s. 8d., in which sum various items figure which deserve a notice. As shewing the extent to which the lower classes sympathised with the movement, we observe that the sum received from shilling and sixpenny visitors exceeds by about L.5000 that derived from the sale of the two-guinea and one-guinea season-tickets, together with the half-crown payments. The revenue obtained from taking charge of sticks, umbrellas, &c., reached the large sum of L.1488, as many as 6000 articles of this kind having been deposited in one day. The profit from the sale of the authorised catalogues amounted also to about L.3300. As commission on the sale of medals struck in the Exhibition, L.327 was paid; and an omnibus proprietor found it worth while to give L.100 for the exclusive privilege of drawing up his vehicles close to the entrance-door. A curious entry, 'excess of cash over numbers indicated by the turnstile regulations, and for unpresented tickets sold,' accounts for no less a sum than L.320. The building, which cost L.38,000 to erect it (exclusive of fittings and decorations), when at last ignominiously brought to the hammer, realised only a little over L.7000. The list of expenses includes the large amount of L.11,531 for the packing and conveyance of contributions, and L.1958 for insurances. The largest sum received at the doors in one day was on October 13th, when L.1361 was received, and upwards of 29,000 persons visited the Exhibition.

A coloured and tabulated record of the temperature maintained in the building shews that the coldest day inside was the 10th of May, when the mean temperature was 43°; the hottest was the 25th of June, when the thermometer shewed 78°. The temperature was ascertained from the mean readings of eight thermometers distributed over the building, without reference to light or shade. During the summer months, the sky-lights were covered outside with calico, to protect the pictures from the direct rays of the sun; and as soon as the temperature within reached 70°, streams of water were pumped over the roof from fire-engines, which had the effect of decreasing the heat by about two degrees. The same table presents a statement as to the depth of rain at various times, from which it appears that the most rainy day during the Exhibition was August 13th, when it reached 1·46 inches, and on which only 4426 visitors made their wet way thither. With reference to the attendance, the total number of visitors as marked by the turnstile was 1,336,715, of which over the million were admitted by payment at the doors. Though this number of course includes all ranks, from royalty down to workhouse children, yet the number of offences against law or propriety seem to have been very small. The sixty-seven policemen present must have had but little employment, since only ten persons were handed over to their special care (chiefly for picking pockets), of whom two were discharged. No charge appears to have occurred in connection with any attempt to steal, or to inflict wilful damage on any of the articles exhibited. These facts speak much for the disposition of the lower classes to shew by orderly and peaceful behaviour their respect for what is intended for their enjoyment; and they may speak something also in favour of the humanising influence of such displays of art.

As guides to the Exhibition, there were published twenty-two different catalogues, hand-books, &c., of various characters and descriptions, from the official catalogue, prepared by artistic hands, down to *Tom Treddlehoyle's Peep at the Art Treasures Exhibition*, written in the broad Lancashire dialect. Of the committee's two catalogues, 168,000 were sold. It would be difficult to estimate the sale of the other twenty. But as many of these were of more than merely local or temporary interest, it cannot be doubted that one of the immediate results of the Exhibition has been to circulate widely popular works respecting art, among classes of people who would otherwise have remained ignorant on the subject. The paper used for printing the official catalogues weighed upwards of thirty tons, the duty upon which amounted to L.428, 4s. 7½d. In another matter, also, the Exhibition contributed largely to the public revenue; the amount paid in postage, for the eighteen months, summed up to L.102, 2s. 10d.; the number of letters received by the committee during that period was 7066; of letters despatched, 16,888.

The arrangements for special excursion-trains entered into by the various railway companies were not so spirited and general as the committee had expected; they believe that their receipts were seriously affected by the apathy manifested in this respect. The number of special excursion-trains carrying passengers to and from the Exhibition, for one fare, was 349; and the estimated number of persons conveyed by them, 131,329. These trains were chiefly confined to the north-western parts of the country; those from the mining and manufacturing districts appear to have been generally well filled: we observe that no less than thirty-seven excursion-trains were from Macclesfield and the potteries. How much more might have been done by a judicious provision of excursion-trains from all parts of England, is shewn by the returns of the chief omnibus proprietor, whose arrangements for the conveyance of passengers in Manchester itself were universally admired. He states that no less than 1,239,820 visitors were conveyed in his omnibuses to and from the Exhibition, and that an average number of 368 horses and 145 men were required to work the vehicles. The fares were 2d. and 3d.; and as each omnibus carried something like an equal number inside and out, the receipts must have amounted to about L.13,000.

With a view to facilitate the obtaining of lodging-accommodation, the committee established a registry for the purpose, at which more than 800 householders entered their names as having accommodation to the extent collectively of 2155 beds: about 2000 visitors availed themselves of this provision. Amongst the appendices to the report, we observe an enumeration of articles lost and returned to the owners, and of lost articles which remained unclaimed. In money, L.95, 18s. 9½d. was restored to the rightful proprietors, besides 547 articles of various kinds; of unclaimed articles, there are 1038. A man need hardly be a Fellow of the Society of Actuaries in order to estimate from these statistics the number of chances to one against any loss of the kind; though, judging from the quantity of lost brooches, bracelets, lockets, shawls, mantles, veils, &c., it seems probable that the fair wearers of such things would have to insure at an advanced rate of premium. Odd gloves, walking-sticks, and season-tickets figure largely in this list—of the last there were sixty-three, all reclaimed; out of 264 walking-sticks, only one was restored; and out of 186 odd gloves, four only found their way back to their lawful partners.

The arrangements for packing and carriage appear to have been admirably carried out. Within a month after the close of the Exhibition, all its various and valuable contents had been repacked and returned to their respective owners. To each of the contributors the committee forwarded a beautifully illuminated card, on which were expressed their grateful acknowledgments for the favour and support accorded them. It is gratifying to know that no single instance of damage sustained by any of the contributors has come to the knowledge of the official managers; while from all quarters they have received flattering expressions of satisfaction from the proprietors of the articles intrusted to their care. The space on which the building stood is now cleared, and not a vestige remains of the vast assemblage of art-creations which so delighted England. The very field in which it stood has been ploughed over. Yet we may hope that it has left behind it results which will act with benefit upon our age, to soften the manners and wake the soul to higher life, and that from the Art Treasures Exhibition, now past and gone, many a future artist and lover of art will arise.

STEAM *VERSUS* SNOW.

'Back! back!—Quick!' cries the guard.

'Back!' shout the stokers, jumping down from their post mid-leg deep into the snow, which closes around them like water, and, driven violently by the storm, is rapidly freezing up every nook and cranny around and beneath the carriages.

Slowly and laboriously, groaning as if in pain, the massive engine moves backward.

The wheels are sunk up to the axles in a half-frozen medium, which resists their progress; while, at the same time, the feathery particles, reduced to a sort of fine dust by the fury of the wind, completely obliterate all trace of their passage.

In spite of the driving clouds of snow, and the piercing blast, the carriage windows are let down, and anxious faces lean out; but nothing meets their view but a wide expanse of spotless white, the surface tossed and agitated like the billows of the sea by the viewless spirits of the air. Through this snow-morass the carriage-wheels plough on heavily, while every moment it rises higher around the now scarcely moving train. Slowly and painfully the stokers wade on beside.

For a few minutes, it seems as if the enfeebled engine would yet have power enough to extricate the train from the deep snow-drift—at least in a backward direction; but the stormy air is laden with whirling flakes, that, falling noiselessly and rapidly, bury the machinery deeper and deeper.

Already the engine itself is nearly covered; the piston-rods creep more slowly up and down; a few irregular jerks, and all is motionless; while, as if the expiring energies of the engine had served as a signal to the spirits of the blast to fall with redoubled fury on their defenceless foe, the storm bursts forth with fresh vigour; and the heavy clouds brooding closer over the scene of action, discharge their contents in compact masses that make common cause with the wild drift whirling aloft to meet them.

'It is all up!' groans the guard.

'It is all up!' echoes the engine-driver; while the stokers join in the dismal chorus. Through the windows, on the sheltered side of the carriages, the passengers' faces are again protruded, apostrophising the unfortunate guard.

'Why, in Heaven's name, are we stopping here in the midst of this storm?'

'Because we are stuck in the snow!'

'When shall we reach Ensfeld?'

'Heaven only knows.'

'But surely to-day at least?'

'Possibly; but possibly also not till the day after to-morrow.'

'Good gracious! Is there no way of escape?'

'From what, madame?'

'Guard!' shouts a rich proprietor, 'I have an appointment to-morrow in L——, and I will pay handsomely to get on.'

'Money can do a good deal, sir, but not against wind and snow.'

At last the much-tried official fairly loses patience with his tormentors.

'What the dickens, gentlemen, do you mean?' he exclaims rather angrily. 'Don't you see the storm that is raging? Can't you have patience in your snug warm carriages, while we're working outside in the cold and snow. We can't do more than we are doing. Everything is being tried to bring you on!'

A council of war is held; the poor fellows standing up to their waists in the white billows, and holding their heads aslant, so as to protect their red and swollen faces and watering eyes against the cutting blast. A message is despatched by the signal-telegraph (the electric has not penetrated into this part of Germany) to the next station: 'Send an engine on the left line of rail;' that is, the one opposite that on which the train is standing, as it seems more free from snow.

The warmest aspirations of the passengers and all concerned accompany the message, as it is spelled slowly out by the skeleton arms of the telegraph, alternating with grave doubts whether it will be visible through the darkened atmosphere.

Meanwhile orders are sent through the watchmen on the line to the nearest village, to collect as many sledges and horses as possible, and bring them on with all haste. The engine-fire is raked out, and precautions taken to prevent the tubes and pumps from being burst with the frost.

When all this has been done, a deathlike stillness steals over the train. The windows are shut, and the passengers sit silently, cooped up in a sort of twilight; for the light of the short winter-day penetrates with difficulty through the frosted panes. The stokers creep into a *coupé*, and only the guard on the roof, and the watchmen stationed to prevent surprise, are exposed to the pelting of the storm. Untiringly do the demons of the tempest labour to inter the lifeless corpse of the departed train; they shower down the crystallised flakes from above, they heap them up from below, they pour out their fury against the ponderous carriages till they rock like the reeds of the marsh; and it is only in the pauses of the storm that their trembling inmates can hear the fierce patter of the frozen snow on the roof and windows. At last, after two hours of painful surprise, a light tinkling of bells is heard in the distance, which tells of the approach of the sledges. The stokers jump out to receive them; but the doors of the coupé are blocked up with snow, and when the men at length alight, they are almost waist-deep.

Only two little peasant-sledges, one of which alone is provided with a tattered covering, are to be found in the village, and these wretchedly equipped vehicles draw up at some distance from the snow-drift, their miserable horses not daring to venture further for fear of being engulfed. The stokers with difficulty open the carriage doors and inform the travellers that there is now an opportunity of proceeding to the neighbouring village, and that any one who chooses may avail himself of it. But it is evident that the sledges cannot contain more than ten persons, and besides it is very uncertain, if one were in the village, how he should get out of it again and proceed on his journey.

The passengers crane their necks out of the windows to inspect the vehicles, which, covered with snow, are scarcely visible above the surrounding surface; but the sight is not encouraging, for after gazing gloomily at them for a moment, they shake their heads with a desponding gesture, and retreat into their fastnesses again. Three terrified ladies, who are determined, at any cost, to leave the ill-fated train, an over-confident young man, ambitious of playing the part of cavalier to the youngest, and an elderly gentleman, are the only persons who prefer the rude sledge and still ruder village to the sinking railway-carriage.

'But, mercy on us! how are we to get through that dreadful snow?' exclaim in piteous accents the mother and aunt, while the daughter, who foresees the inevitable *dénouement*, blushes until her fresh rosy cheeks, already purple with cold, assume a still deeper dye. 'You shall be carried, ladies,' interposes the guard, a tall powerful man, formerly a corporal in the horse-artillery. 'Certainly, we will carry you,' exclaims the cavalier joyfully; and heedless of his varnished boots and thin trousers, he jumps out of the carriage into the snow, and disappears until his gold watch-chain is barely visible. Meanwhile the icy particles are darting maliciously, like so many needles, through his fashionable garments, until his teeth chatter, and his knees knock together as he holds out his arms to receive the young lady, who stands coyly in the carriage door, and only finally resolves to intrust her pretty person to her paladin's care when she sees her mother and aunt borne past in the stalwart arms of the guard and driver. Not much encouraged by the broad grin on the countenances of these officials, who look like polar bears in their furry garments, the adventurous youth receives his fair burden in his arms; but to wade up to the middle in snow, and to carry withal considerably over a hundredweight of beauty, is not a feat which any chance traveller may accomplish. Who can blame him therefore if, instead of following the athletic guard, he takes the shortest possible way towards the sledge, never dreaming that a treacherous ditch, six feet deep, which forms the boundary of the line, lies directly in his route. The spectators see the danger. Delighted at the idea of his discomfiture, and yet really uneasy about the consequences, they shout to the panting hero. But their voices cannot reach him through the storm, and suddenly, with mingled feelings of terror and amusement, they see the paladin and his burden disappear noiselessly, as through the trap-door of a theatre, and the downy snow close over them without leaving a trace of their passage. With muttered imprecations on his stupidity, and yet not without some peals of laughter, the guard and engine-driver make their way to the spot; and, while the former unrolls, as if from innumerable folds of wadding, the terrified beauty, the latter seizes the sputtering half-choked hero by the unmentionables, extricates him from his living grave, and shaking him soundly to free him from the adhering snow, places him for warmth between two of the ladies in the sledge. The old gentleman in his turn being carried across, the little caravan puts itself in motion, and soon disappears amid the thickened atmosphere.

Hours creep on; the guard allows the third-class passengers to change into the warm cushioned carriage of the second class, and by degrees the short winter-day assumes the gloomy tint of storm and evening. The spirits of the passengers sink lower and lower; the snow-dust penetrates through every, even the smallest, crevice, and gradually saturates their clothing; the frozen oil will not burn; heat deserts their powerless limbs; the noisy jests and forced laughter of the morning, over their ill-luck, are changed into real complaining, and the unpleasantness of their position is beginning to cause serious suffering in frames not accustomed to hardship in any shape. Those feelings are still further increased by the depressing effect of the advancing darkness, the wide naked expanse stretching around on every side without a house or even a tree to enliven the prospect, the raging storm, and the sense of entire helplessness against the elements thus aroused in their fury. Many shrink back appalled at the idea of thus passing the long winter-night, and scarcely hoping to see the break of a new day. The guard, whose patience is severely tried, clambers from carriage to carriage, administers comfort as well as he can, and explains that it is possible another train can be sent on the opposite line of rails, which are not so deeply snowed in; but that in the meantime, nothing can be done but wait, wait, wait! In the midst of the general and increasing gloom, a cry falls on the ear, during a momentary lull in the storm, like a joy-bell: 'A light—a signal!' Quick as thought, the guard swings himself to the top of a carriage, and gazes eagerly at the dark-red star that twinkles through the gloom in the distance. Now it disappears, then comes in view again; but ever becoming brighter. At last, O joy! it disappears no more; it blazes out clear and strong, and by degrees resolves itself into three ruby points. 'It is no signal!' shouts the guard excitedly; 'it is the engine itself, and yonder are the three lanterns!'

The tidings infuse new life into both passengers and men. The windows clatter open, and are speedily thronged with eager faces gazing out at the three fiery points gleaming through the whirling snow and advancing rapidly. Soon the lighted windows of the carriages are visible, awakening indescribable emotions of relief in the breasts of the beleaguered travellers. Now they are within a few hundred yards! Signals are made to the delivering engine from the lifeless express-train; the latter answers them with a shrill and prolonged whistle, which sounds in the ears of the passengers like a scream of joy, and the stately vehicle is seen advancing majestically along the opposite rails.

With quick fierce snorts it comes on, its mighty mechanism moving with steady but resistless power; its furnace-doors are open, and from within bursts forth a deep glow that envelops the whole fabric in a halo of light, and gives it the appearance of some monster belching forth clouds of fire and smoke. The flaming lamps in front throw a wide quivering reflection on the spotless surface over which they are advancing, and render visible the massive snow-ploughs with which the engine is equipped.

It is on the verge of the drift, but pausing not for a moment, it glides on, while the ploughs, driven on from behind by a power of three hundred horses, bury themselves in the mass of snow. The effect is instantaneous. Tossed wildly upwards, the feathery particles whirl aloft in dense clouds, rendered luminous by the glow from the furnace, and then descend hissing and streaming over the heated mechanism, which stops not in its stately march until the deliverer, all glowing with life and power, and panting with its noble efforts, stands proudly beside its helpless brother.

Swinging their bright lanterns, a crowd of bearded figures jump from the engine, and proceed hurriedly to throw open the carriage doors. 'Quick, quick!' they shout from end to end of the train; 'not a moment is to be lost, or we shall be snowed up ourselves!' This time there is no hesitation; floundering through the snow, stumbling and rising, anyhow and everyhow, the passengers throng into the snugly lighted carriages, while the guard proceeds to the door of a first class in the defunct train, from which, during the whole day, no voices or movements have proceeded. As he opens the door, a startling spectacle meets his gaze, an appetising odour assails his nostrils. Four Englishmen are bending eagerly over something or other, as if in adoration at some sacred altar. On the floor of the carriage, which is freed from its carpet, and in the centre, stands a beefsteak-machine, with a powerful spirit-lamp underneath; slices of ham are frying on the surface, delicate rolls of bread lie piled near at hand, a tea-kettle is singing away busily, and three of these experienced travellers have glasses of steaming punch in their hands, while the fourth is just replenishing their kettle with a snow-ball.

'Well, old fellow, what do you want here?' 'Have a glass of grog, to warm your old nose?' 'Shut up, and be off, or you will freeze us to death,' are the various exclamations hurled at the intruder, who can scarcely collect his thoughts sufficiently to inform the jolly travellers that a train has arrived to relieve them.

'Where are you going to take us?' they inquire.

'Back to N——.'

'Why, we slept there yesterday; and a worse hotel or a dearer is not in the Kaiser's dominions. We shall stay here in the carriage.'

'Well, I warn you, you will be snowed up. It may be mid-day to-morrow before you are relieved.'

'That's of no consequence—we are very comfortable where we are.'

'But you must not burn a spirit-lamp in'——

'Let the fools stay,' whispers the engine-driver in his ear. 'I shall have to remain at anyrate, and perhaps they will allow me a corner in their carriage, if I keep watch for them while they are asleep.'

The guard laughs, and allows the little irregularity to pass, on the condition that the travellers will permit the engine-driver to share their carriage.

'Certainly—why not? Shew your friend in.' And the driver, shaking himself free from some of his frozen integuments, rather sheepishly enters. 'Here, my lad, take that;' and the driver, nothing loath, tosses off a glass of steaming punch. 'But, I say, you must leave us light.'

A lamp is handed in, the door shut, and they are left to their fate. The relief-train gives a wild and lengthened whistle of farewell, burrows backward through the snow, and is lost to view in the distance. All the night long the storm howls, and the surcharged clouds pour down their feathery burden.

* * * * The express-train is literally snowed up; nothing is visible above the surface but the guard's seat and a portion of the engine-chimney. It is noon the following day before the task of shovelling away the accumulated masses of snow can be attempted, under the direction of the guard, who, really uneasy for the consequences of the lodging-licence he had given, arrives at the head of a large body of men for the purpose.

Towards evening, with the most strenuous exertions, they reach the door of the fated carriage.

His forehead dripping with perspiration, caused as much by anxiety as by the violent efforts he has been making, the guard shovels away the incumbent snow, tears the door open; but no dead are disclosed to view in this modern Pompeii. A warm vapour streams out on the icy air, the grog-kettle is boiling away on the stove, and propped against the angles of the carriage recline the stalwart forms and rosy faces of the prisoners, in deep repose.

'Why did you disturb us?' yawns one of them, raising himself sleepily from his couch.

'Have another glass of grog?' stammers a second. 'We have had a capital snooze!'

THE OLDEST MANUSCRIPT IN THE WORLD.

There is a certain divinity which doth hedge extreme antiquity, and make itself felt even by the most unreflecting of mankind. The veriest spendthrift, the player of 'dick-duck-drake' with his own and others' money, still looks upon a newly excavated coin of the Roman Cæsars, with some, however transient, interest. The man who loves his beer 'from the pewter' (and little else), and despises high art of all kinds, will yet have his admiration awakened by some jug, just recovered from an entombed Herculaneum or Pompeii. And even if we chance to address a reader who never reads anything but a periodical or newspaper of the current week, he cannot, we honestly believe, but be willing to hear something of a manuscript, recently discovered, of *between four and five thousand years old!* It is indeed with documents of such an epoch that we are about to deal; and our data—if that expression can be made use of, when we can fix nothing with certainty to within five hundred years or so—are taken from an essay entitled *Hieratic Papyri*, by Mr C. W. Goodwin, in the most recent number of the *Cambridge Essays*, which is also, we regret to say, the last of that well-written and ably edited series.

Since the death of Champollion, whose *Grammaire Egyptienne* first placed the study of Egyptian literature upon a solid basis, considerable progress has been made, it seems, in the deciphering of the hieratic writing; that is to say, in the writing used by the ancient Egyptians for literary composition and the purpose of ordinary life, as opposed to the *hieroglyphics* or symbolic writing upon the tombs and temples. It appears to have existed, with various modifications, from the earliest times down to 600 B.C., or nearly the epoch of the Persian invasion. 'In general, each word is *spelt* by phonetic signs, which stand either for letters or syllables. The word thus spelt is followed by one or more symbols, which are not sounded, but indicate the class of ideas to which the word belongs. Thus, there are symbols to mark ideas of motion, violent action, thought, repose, wickedness, animals, vegetables, and a host of others. . . . . The discovery of the use of the determinative symbols was Champollion's great achievement; the mixture of them with the alphabetical symbols having perplexed all previous inquirers. . . . . In the hieratic writing there are constantly found three of them applied to a single word. . . . . The radical letters of a large number of Egyptian words are now known, and a good many of them may be traced in the Coptic, the laws of which have been ascertained . . . . a good many, too, have their congeners in Hebrew and Syriac.'

Just as in the working out of those ciphers about which so many of our readers busied themselves some twelve months ago, it is clear that every word of which the meaning has once been disclosed must lead the way to the discovery of others; and thus the revival of the old Egyptian vocabulary, of the very language in which Memnon sang, is to be expected in due time. The hieratic literary documents, at present available, amount to fifteen, of which a couple of examples will be amply sufficient for our purpose. The first is a papyrus recently purchased by the trustees of the British Museum from Madame d'Orbiney, a lithographed *fac-simile* of which has been made, and will be published shortly. It contains a romance or fairy tale, and is of the age of the nineteenth dynasty —about 1300 B.C.; a period, according to Lepsius, identical with that under which the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt, and their departure from that country, took place. It is to the times of Rameses II. (Pharaoh) and his successors that the greater part of all these papyri—with one very remarkable exception, however—belong, and they therefore present to us a picture of Egyptian life and character precisely at that period of the history of that people which has become most interesting to us. The D'Orbiney papyrus was published in French in 1852, by the Vicomte de Rongé, conservator of the Egyptian collection in the Louvre, but it will be doubtless new to most English readers. It is a roll containing nineteen pages of writing, in the finest style of Egyptian calligraphy. The first five pages are a little damaged, but not much.

'The recto and verso of the last page contain the name of King Leti-Meneptah II. (the next sovereign but one to Pharaoh), but with the titles of "ensign-bearer on the king's left, generalissimo of infantry, and king's son;' from which M. de Rongé concludes that the papyrus belonged to this prince before his accession to the throne. It does not appear, however, to have been composed expressly for the edification of the young Pharaoh, for it is dedicated by the author, Enna, to three scribes of his own college, Ka-kabu, Hora, and Meriemass; but we may fairly conclude that this was a copy made for the use of the prince, to whom we may also, with some probability, ascribe the well-thumbed condition of its first five pages. The contents may be thought childish, and they certainly throw no light upon history; but the book, from its very simplicity, is the most useful document yet discovered for the illustration of the Egyptian language, and affords the means of determining at once, in the most complete manner, the meaning of a number of words and phrases which could only be guessed at in other manuscripts.'

This is the beginning of the fairy story 3200 years old:

'This relates to two brothers, children of the same mother and father: the name of the elder was Anessou (Anubis); the name of the younger was Satou. Anessou being the head of the house, married, and he treated his younger brother as his son.'

Satou appears to have done a good deal of work for the family, however, although he was treated as one of them, and to have been generally obedient, and not contradictory.

'When he returned from the field, he brought back all sorts of fodder; he sat down with his brother and sister to eat and drink, and then went to the stall to tend his cattle.

'When the earth was again illumined, and the dawn appeared, the hour of going to the fields being come, he called his cattle, and led them to feed in the meadow. He followed them . . . . and his cattle told him which were the choicest feeding-places, for he understood all their language. And when he brought them back to the stalls, they found them supplied with all the herbs that they loved. The cattle which he tended became extremely fat, and multiplied greatly. When the season of tillage arrived, his elder brother said to him: "Let us take the teams and go to plough, for the land appears (that is, the water of the inundation had subsided), and is fit for culture. When we have ploughed it, you shall fetch the seed." So the young man proceeded to execute what his elder brother told him.'

When Satou goes home, he finds his brother's wife combing her hair, and instead of giving him corn, that young woman makes violent love to him. An incident in Israelitish history, very well known to us, occurs, in short, over again, and the slighted woman endeavours to revenge herself upon Satou by libelling him to her credulous husband.

'The elder brother became as furious as a panther; he sharpened his sword, and took it in his hand. Then he went and stood behind the door of the ox-stall, ready to kill his younger brother on his arrival, in the evening, with his cattle. When the sun set, Satou came back, according to his daily wont. As he approached, the cow which halted first to enter the stall, said to her keeper: "Methinks thy elder brother is yonder with his sword, ready to kill thee when thou comest near him." He heard the words of his first cow, and then came another and said the same. Then he looked under the door of the stall, and he saw the feet of his brother, who stood behind the door, his sword in his hand. He threw his load on the ground, and began to run as fast as he could; and his brother pursued him sword in hand.' Satou invokes the sun-god Ra:

'My good lord, it is thou who shewest on which side is wrong and which is right.'

The sun-god hears the complaint, and causes a wide river, full of crocodiles, to flow between the brothers. With this gulf between them, the innocent party makes his explanation, and convinces Anessou, but declines to return, and retires to the Valley of the Acacia, a remote place, apparently beyond the limits of Egypt.

Anassou slays his wife, and gives her to the—some Egyptologists say the dogs, some the pigs.

Satou takes his heart—his own—and places it in the flowers of an acacia tree, telling his brother how to search for it if he needs to renew their friendship. Ra, the sun-god, asks Noum, the creator, for a wife for Satou, heartless though the poor fellow be. All the gods endow her with gifts, but the seven Hattias —sacred cows, and, we suppose, old friends of Satou —say she is to die a violent death. This woman, the story goes on to say, is presently captivated by the wealth of the king of Egypt, forsakes her husband for him, and gets him to cut down the acacia tree, by which means Satou, whose heart is in it, becomes a lifeless corpse.

In the meantime, however, Anessou comes to seek his brother, and finds one part of the acacia tree still lying on the ground, with the heart of his brother beneath it, whom he accordingly revives and restores completely.

Satou takes the form of a sacred bull, is pronounced a genuine Apis by the priests, and worshipped by the court. He takes an opportunity of bellowing to the perfidious queen, when she comes to worship one day, that he is her husband Satou alive after all. She runs away in terror, and induces the king to swear an oath that he will give her whatever she demands. She asks, to his great scandalisement, for the liver of the bull. Its head is cut off; but two drops of blood fall upon two garden-beds, from which spring two magnificent persea trees. The leaves reproach again the perfidious queen, and she gets the obnoxious trees cut down, since they will make 'such excellent timber.' A chip flies off from one of the trees and enters her mouth. After this, she produces a son, a royal offspring, who is made Prince of Ethiopia—the title of the heir-apparent. This child is the chip of the old block—is Satou—after all. The wife is condemned: and the old fairy story ends like a modern novel, with the happiness of all the good people.

It will be observed how similar are some of the details of this story with a very favourite one in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, which is, however, in point of time, quite a now-a-day narration compared to it. Belonging, however, to a very respectable antiquity as this tale of The Two Brothers certainly does, it becomes quite a 'gift-book of the season,' and a romance of the passing hour, when contrasted with the papyrus we have yet to speak of. Our late author, Enna, bears about the same chronological relation to Ptah-hotep, the writer of this work, as Mr Martin Farquhar Tupper, the editor of King Alfred's Ballads, bears to King Alfred. This gentleman (Ptah-hotep) was 'king's son and provincial governor,' in the reign of Assa, sovereign of both Egypts, who belonged to the seventh dynasty, or about 3000 B.C.! The papyrus in question was obtained by M. Prisse d'Avennes while making explorations among the tombs of the early Theban kings who preceded Amen-em-ha, the founder of the twelfth dynasty; of which race of kings the British Museum possesses one coffin, and the Louvre another. It is written in hieratic characters, but extremely different in appearance from those of the papyri of the later dynasty. The symbols and groups, however, are easily identified by those who are acquainted with the works of 'the Ramesside period.' 'It contains eighteen pages of writing, the first two being the conclusion of a work. Then follows an erasure of the size of a page or two —the papyrus having been carefully scraped, as if with the intention of inserting a new text. After this come sixteen pages which comprise a complete work, entitled *The Instructions of the Magistrate Ptah-hotep, under his Majesty the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Assa, Ever-living;'* a hand-book of advice composed, be it observed, more than two thousand years before the wise sayings of Solomon!

It begins by saying: 'When the king of both Egypts, Ouren, died, then the king of both Egypts, Suefrou, became the king of the whole land. Then was I made a magistrate.'

The tablets of King Suefrou, at Wadi-Megara, in the Sinaitic peninsula, recording his conquests over the Arabs, are thought to be the earliest historical monuments in existence. And there is certainly no doubt that this papyrus—with the exception of one said to be of the same epoch, in the Berlin Museum—is *the oldest manuscript in the world.* Both the fragment and the entire piece consist of proverbs and maxims upon moral and social subjects, which, like the didactic efforts of most authors, labour under the disadvantage of being excessively dull. We shall therefore extract but sparely.

'The obedience of a docile son is a blessing; he who is obedient walks in his obedience, and he who listens to him becomes obedient. . . . . A son teachable in God's service, will be happy in consequence of his obedience; he will grow to be old, he will find favour; he will speak in like manner to his children. . . . . Precious for a man is the discipline of his father. Every one will respect it as he himself has done.' There is a great deal more in the same aphoristic tone, which, however wise at the time it was spoken, now partakes largely of the nature of platitude.

Ptah-hotep thus concludes his instructions:

'It is thus that I would gain for thee health of body and the king's peace, in all circumstances, and that thou mayst pass the years of this life without deceit. I have become an ancient of the earth. I have passed a hundred and ten years of life, by grace of the king, and the approbation of the ancients, fulfilling my duty towards the king, in the place of their favour.'

So ends the primeval sage; and 'finished from beginning to end, as it is found in the original,' adds the scribe.

Mr Goodwin is of opinion that in this land of travellers, undreamed-of hieratic treasures may be lying in private cabinets. One great impediment to Egyptological inquiry in England seems to be that we have no hieroglyphical types: that London is lacking in a matter where Paris and Berlin have abundance; although in neither of those cities have *hieratic* types yet been attempted.

The Egyptians seem to be by this time well aware of the commercial value of these papyri, and, consequently, they are much addicted to breaking up the precious manuscripts, in order to make the most of them. So ignorant are they of the language of their ancestors, that they often tear the papyri *down the middle*, and offer for sale to the enthusiastic student only the beginnings or ends of lines—which is disappointing.

Still it must be something to possess even a mutilated fragment of a manuscript four thousand years old! To see, to touch, to decipher what has been written for the edification of the grandson of him who was drowned in the Red Sea! What a strange, nay, almost awful sensation must one experience then, who, like M. Prisse d'Avennes, himself exhumes from the burial-place of antediluvian kings some precious document unhandled by human fingers for scores of ages—who is the first to cast his eyes upon the papyrus, since it was perused by Ptah-hotep, magistrate under his Majesty the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Assa, Ever-living!

HELP TO THE FALLEN.

There are two kinds of Philanthropists in Great Britain; the one sort are always ready with their money, their sympathy, and whatever else they have to give, for all cases worthy of assistance, and for some that are not worthy; the other are exceedingly and almost superfluously munificent with their advice. This last is generally, however, of a discouraging character; pointing out how very much there is to be done in every department of moral and physical reform, and at the same time exhibiting how worse than useless is the particular remedy which happens to be more immediately submitted to their consideration. These latter persons have the reputation of being the wiser, as they are, beyond all question, the more prudent; and we propose to address ourselves to both these classes.

Again: there are some so tender-hearted with regard to Criminals, that they would treat them as erring brethren rather than as social pests, and who push their gentleness to the very brink of maudlin sentiment; and there are others who have nothing to say for Offenders but 'Hang, hang,' and whose feelings seem to be well-nigh as base and unrelenting as those which animate the objects of their hatred. These dragons of virtue do not reflect upon what must needs happen in a country such as ours, where education is, to a great extent, impossible to the poor, and where the Dangerous Classes grow up, all by themselves, in filthy sties, situated within a few minutes' walk of half the riches of Europe; namely, that thousands of our fellow-countrymen are born and bred every year in an atmosphere of temptation and ignorance such as honesty cannot draw breath in; are educated *perforce*—by Necessity as well as by Father and Mother—in thieving and debauchery; are brought up to the profession of Crime, just as certainly, just as naturally, as the Respectable Classes are brought up to the Church and the Bar, the Counter and the Desk; that, in fact, as far as the juvenile offenders themselves are concerned, who will be placed before the sitting magistrates, next Monday or any other morning, by scores, in our great cities, charged with this and with that, they will have committed no real *crime* at all, but only a *necessity*, discountenanced, for very sufficient reasons, by the law of the land. Snug social Moralists, and highly respectable—nay, even highly logical—Political Theorists, have their 'unnatural discordances' and their 'universal laws,' as the case may be, to apply to all this, of course with results more or less unsatisfactory; but again, we say, we have no quarrel with either of them, or with any others; we are speaking only of matters of fact, and address ourselves equally to the Sentimentalist and to the Political Economist.

We suppose Nature and the Law to have taken their courses as usual, and the thief-boy to have grown up gradually into the convict-man—whom, contrary to the good wishes of many wise persons, we cannot get hung; the question which affects us all almost as much as the individual himself is, *What are we to do with him when he comes out of prison?* 'Sweep him into space,' cry Mr Carlyle and the philosophers; but there is as yet no tramway constructed to that terminus, nor conveyance of any kind (to be procured) which runs thither by any road at all. 'Let him go to the devil,' says the eminently Practical Man—which advice, it is like enough, he will follow; only, unfortunately, he must needs come to us first. He must needs return into that world which has already once cast him out, and well remembers that it has done so. However much it may have been wanting in precautions for the Child's moral health, in the first instance, now that the outward marks of the leprosy of Crime are upon the Man, it is horrified and shocked enough. 'Keep away, wicked wretch! Avaunt, ticket-of-leave man! Keep your eye upon him, policeman, and never take it off again, on any account. Seize every opportunity of putting him back again into prison, which is his proper place. He has begun the Ishmael game of setting his hand against every honest man's, and we will see who will tire of it first!' Such is, without doubt, the general feeling of the respectable classes against the Discharged Prisoner; while, to excuse themselves for leaving him to starve or steal, they add this not unnatural or unjust inquiry: 'Are we to employ this fellow—when employment is scarce enough—in preference to an honest man who has resisted all temptation?' Once more, let us assert that we understand the strength of this position likewise, and are addressing ourselves to those who stand by it as much as to any.

The Discharged Prisoner, then, having legally expiated his crime, is, according to the verdict of a Christian Public, never to expiate it morally, but to die in his sin. Unfortunately, however, unless he gets a good chance of committing a murder, or at least of a burglary with violence—and, pray, remember, that it is the Christian Public's throat which is cut, and the Christian Public's house which is broken open, in such a case—there is no chance of his dying, or being put out of the way at all. He remains amongst us all his life long, diminishing the profits, and purloining the goods of the honest community, except during the intervals of his professional leisure, when he is kept by them in prison at a very considerable expense. With his old associates, habits, and predilections, and with his *no* means of getting a livelihood, this must needs be the case, and is abundantly proved to be so.

To obviate this, and, at the same time, to give the poor wretch a chance of beginning life afresh, is the object of the *Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society*. This association was determined upon by a number of members of parliament and other gentlemen in February 1857, and commenced its operations in the succeeding May. The plan which it has adopted with respect to Discharged Prisoners is this: Particulars of the respective cases are obtained by the Society from the governors of the prisons from whence they are about to be released. Should these prove satisfactory—for its means being at present but limited, the objects of the Society's aid may well be picked and chosen—the ex-convict makes over his gratuity (received on quitting the prison) into the hands of the association, and it is employed in assisting him to emigrate, or to enable him to obtain work in this country. Although this latter boon seems to have been oftener obtained for him than we should have imagined, there are many difficulties in the way of it. Not only must masters be found willing to take a convicted thief into their premises and among their goods, but fellow-workmen, also, of a sufficient charity to receive him; for it is well provided that the introduction of a felon among honest folk shall never take place without their knowledge, alike for their sake and for his own; since the existence of such a secret in his breast is found to beget a habit of habitual deceit in the man, who has certainly no need for any such additional drawback to the carrying out of his new resolutions for good. When the thing can be done, it is clear that emigration is the best hope of the Discharged Prisoner, as it is the surest safeguard for us. In a new world, and under entirely new circumstances, he has almost as good a chance as any other of playing an honest part for the future, while in this country he has next to none. It must not be forgotten, too, that a very considerable sum of money—the combined gratuities of the Discharged Prisoners—is thus prevented from being wasted upon very worthless objects, and is rendered beneficial in the highest degree to its possessor. In very many cases, the Society's help is confined to enabling the Discharged Prisoner to lay out his money in the manner most advantageous to himself. Those already assisted to emigrate have cost, on an average, L.9, 7s. a head, of which L.6, 13s. 6d. has been provided by the Discharged Prisoners themselves, and L.2, 13s. 6d. by the Society. The applications for help, however, are still far more numerous than the funds of the association are able to meet, and we think, since its system is as practical as it is benevolent, that it has a claim upon every class of social reformers. The letters of those Discharged Prisoners who have been thus assisted, and from their masters, both at home and abroad, have been for the most part exceedingly gratifying and satisfactory. During the last eighteen months, 102 men and women have been helped to emigrate; while 281 have either had employment found for them, or have been assisted to rejoin their honest friends.

SPRING.

THRICE-welcome Spring! whose dewy locks are bright
With braided gems from tearful April skies;
Earth's resurrection-time from nature's night,
When all her treasure in its store-house lies;
Thrice welcome, with thy pride of flowers and song,
To hearts that deemed the sad probation long.

The mellow thrush, long since, had caught thy smile,
And through the valley poured a prophet's lay,
As though his music could the storms beguile
That lingered yet around thy vernal way,
And cheat the violet by the naked thorn
To venture, ere one sheltering leaf was born.

But thou *art* here; the greenwood paths betray
A lingering glow their summer haunts beside;
And the gay laugh of childhood rings away
From mossy bank, green dell, or bleak hillside;
Their world of pleasure and of wealth now lies
In Spring's rich golden flowers and sunny skies.

This is the painter's studio, art has nought
To rival nature in her halcyon time—
Bright pictures that the teeming brain has wrought
Are dim reflections from some purer clime;
For this, through winter's gloom, his spirit yearned,
And 'mid dark hours Hope's quenchless watch-fire burned.

And ye, the students and the toilers, where
Commerce and trade have reared their myriad shrines,
A truce to such—and let sweet nature share
A thought while yet Spring's dewy morning shines;
The music of these fresh bird-anthemed shades shall cheer,
And age and care lose half their sorrows here.

The poet's soul is stirred with deep delight;
For him the world's exuberant life wakes up
Leaf, bud, and flower, expanding in his sight;
The beaded dew-drop in the lily's cup
Falls not unnoticed; and the mystic voice
Of sympathy, with nature doth rejoice.

O precious seed-time! can we prize as such
The swift-winged hours no other season knows;
Or shall the ploughman deem the toil too much
That to the reaper golden sheaves bestows?
Earth, thy sweet seasons run their yearly round,
While but one Spring, for man, frail man, is found.

A. A.

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THE LEATHER BAG.

How much the bag contained, I do not know, and question whether Andrew Millar himself did. It had in it the savings of twenty years, and was full upon the flitting-day, just three weeks before the date of my story. His wife and daughters knew nothing about it at all; they had never seen it: they knew he had money somewhere, for when it was wanted it was forthcoming; but whatever they might conjecture, they certainly didn't know where he kept it, how he kept it, or how much he had. The little gray man became quite ugly on any allusion to these subjects. He had a morbid, diseased anxiety for the security of his money—a jealousy lest any one, saving himself, should see, touch, handle, or disburse a farthing of it, that was far from conducive to domestic felicity.

Was Andrew a miser? How often his wife and daughters had debated the point within a dozen years! And if he wasn't, what were they to make of the passion that had so gradually overcome his natural feelings? The wiry little gray man had been such a soft, gentle, loving fellow, his wife used to say, till carefulness grew upon him, and he became suspicious and distrustful, and misinterpreted every act of love and dutifulness done towards him. O that weary wooden chest, with the golden secret, and the family sorrow locked up in it! No, he wasn't a miser, not a bit of him. Did he ever hesitate to pay for the housekeeping, however he might quarrel with it? or fail to order, of his own free-will, the new gowns at the proper seasons? His love of money was none of your common sort; wasn't an unreasonable desire for more and ever more of it, though it had at one time looked like that. What was it, then? How ever did he the other day, all at once, make up his mind to give up business and take the new house, cheerfully, looking more pleasant than he had done, indoors, for many a day? He was bewitched, that was what he was; and Molly and Kate looked grave, as if they saw no other way of explaining the matter.

And so, in a sense, he was, and, I think, even had they known the history of his relation to that leather bag, they would still have persisted in their theory. It was an old satchel, a small one, in which, when a boy, he had carried his books to school. When he walked across country to be apprenticed—a walk of nearly twenty miles from his father's croft—he carried in the satchel the bread and butter which his mother's anxiety provided for his sustenance by the way. While he was an apprentice, he kept his Bible in it, and the first pound-note he ever earned he kept in the Bible.

As he advanced in life, the 'guid buke' fattened with his savings; all in notes, between its leaves, till it could hold no more of them, and had to be laid aside; by which time, through use and wont, and the association of ideas, Andrew had come to prefer 'bank or banker's notes' to every form of the currency. He derived more pleasure from seeing the notes stuff out the sides of that bag, than the ring of gold pieces against the walls of the safest iron box could ever have given him. For twenty years, he watched the progress of his fortunes in the stomach of the bag. Time was, he used to play with fortune, taking the notes out, one by one, 'rumpling' them, to make them bulk well, and putting them in till the bag would swell as if it would immediately deliver itself of a competency; and after complacently contemplating it in this state for some time, he would put them by in even folds, and sigh over the mere embryo of an independence to which they contracted. It had been the main pleasure of his life to watch the bag, and many a struggle it had cost him to reconcile his duties to it with those which, being by nature a kindly fellow, he could not but acknowledge were owing to his family. He took a pride in it; he would sit after work-hours and smoke his pipe, and look at it as if it were a child, as it lay cradled in the wooden chest; and now and then, in later years, he would stroke its back, and wink at it—the old rogue—taking it into his confidence; but down with the lid with a bang at once at the first sound of a footfall, let it be of wife or daughter, coming towards him. At last the dream of his life was realised, and the bag that had been year by year becoming more and more dropsical, was ready to burst, and Andrew declared his intention to retire from business.

As was natural, with Andrew's pride in his store, his anxiety for its safety increased till it became, as I have said, a disease. It was so in the old days before the flitting; but now the complaint increased in virulence. Then, if he ever took a note out of the bag—which, in spite of his keeping a few in reserve *that had never been put in*, he was sometimes obliged to do—next day it would look, to his regretful eyes, as much thinner as if he had taken two; but now that it was all taking out and no putting in, he so fretted and worried himself, and tried the temper of the family, that they were disposed to leave him, house and all, and begin life again, 'any how, no how,' as Mrs Andrew put it, rather than put up with him. About the time that they were brought to this pass, Andrew, after much bad logic and a great struggle with his better nature, made up his mind that in some way his lockfast-places were being tampered with, and that out of the chest and out of the house the bag must go, and that immediately; and so he cast about for a place in which to conceal it.

At the head of the garden, behind the house, was an old stone-wall, on the top of which—now he had nothing better to do—he used to sit and smoke his after-breakfast pipe; and there he was as usual one morning soon after the above resolution had been formed, with his legs dangling over the dike on the side of it facing the house, and musing with puffs, fast and slow, according to the current of his thoughts, on the best thing to be done. Suddenly he removed his cutty from his mouth, leaned his head a little towards his left shoulder, screwed down the lid of his left eye, and winked, while the smoke curled round his knowing old pate, till his right eye, too long exposed to it, winced and ended the wink that might otherwise have lasted for ever. It was the wink of a discoverer of something under his very nose, and as much as said: 'O you old fool! how didn't you think of it before?' He hitched himself on to the ground, and paced up and down, slowly, along-side the old wall, looking stealthily at it, occasionally nodding to it, and smoking steadily all the while with much joyousness in his old face. The wall was full of odd crannies, letter-box holes all along the side of it, and looked just the sort of wall that a man would like to look upon who had a bag of money to hide. Before finishing his pipe, he made up his mind as to the very place to put it in—a hole that turned to the one side, and widened into a perfect little chamber, two feet below the top, and in the very heart of the masonry.

It remained to put the bag in its place without being seen; nor was Andrew long in finding an opportunity for doing so. On Sunday, the great Mr Thumpanbawl was to preach in the parish church—there was only one church in the little village of A—— in those days—and Andrew calculated that every one who could, would go and hear that 'powerfu' preacher.' So, when Sunday morning came, Andrew had a shocking headache. He communicated the fact to his spouse in bed, and she told Molly and Kate, who were astir, and made tea for him in a short time; they were all so sorry and attentive, and indeed so anxious, that he felt half ashamed of his hypocrisy. Yet when he got up, he shammed that he could take no breakfast, and nearly spoiled his game altogether by holding his head on one side and groaning. He was greatly terrified by Molly putting on her shawl to go for the doctor, and Kate protesting that she would—they all would—stay at home with him in spite of the attractions of Mr Thumpanbawl. Before the breakfast-things were removed, however, his headache was almost gone. He still felt too poorly to go to church, yet was not too unwell to look after himself; so when the hour came, and the bell rang, the family set out with many expressions of hope and trust that he might be better when they returned. Andrew chuckled, as he stood at the window and 'saw them out of sight.' Great was his excitement when the bell ceased; yet he held to his plan, allowing twenty minutes for the congregation fairly to assemble; after which, opening the back-door carefully, he stole with his treasure up the garden, looking about him with the circumspection of guilt, lest any one should see him. Having hid the bag, and torn himself away from it with difficulty into the house, he lighted his pipe in the front-kitchen—as if wholly to disconnect himself from recent transactions at the back of the house—and sat in the ingle with the 'guid buke' close at hand, in case of a surprise.

When his people returned from church, he wore the air of one coming round, and 'verra much better, am obleeged t'ye.' At the same time, he had great difficulty in repressing a tendency to chuckle over the success of his plan. His efforts at maintaining the composure of indifference and the air of an invalid, were as ridiculous as they were fatiguing, and, as the day advanced, proved a new source of alarm to his wife and daughters, who were startled by the novelty of his behaviour. In the evening, he became fatigued with acting, and, at the same time, extremely nervous, and desirous to satisfy his senses of the safety of his money; the more so, as he could invent no reasonable pretence for going into the garden. He tried to convince himself by arguments that it was all right—and if it was all wrong, how, at that time of night, could he mend it? Thus he see-sawed between fear and confidence till the hour came for worship, which he conducted so incoherently as greatly to alarm the family. As it would happen, the chapter that fell to be read that night was the sixth of Matthew, in which the verse occurs: 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.' Reviewing his sensations of that day, and recalling the many miserable days in past years which his money had brought him, he paused and groaned. He felt the wisdom of the recommendation; he returned on the verse, and read it again slowly, while his wife, with a queer interrogative air, looked up at him from her book, and over her spectacles. He didn't like it, and had never felt so uncomfortable. The *thieves* in the verse didn't improve it! And then followed the words: 'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' Could anything be more true? Wasn't his *heart* at this very moment, when he was on the point of kneeling to make a pretence of prayer, out in the hole, two feet from the top, and near the middle of the old stone-dike? Oh, could he only be sure that his *treasure was* there also! Before bedtime, he was twice on the point of stating the whole case to them, making a clean breast of it, and getting the bag in; but he couldn't screw himself up to that point. Weren't they all anxiety about him and the illness of the day? and was he to tell them it was all a sham? He couldn't do it. And by this time, his old feet were being washed by Kate in a tub of hot water; and Molly was lowering with a wooden spoon the temperature of a large bowl of gruel—spiced, buttered, and qualified with whisky, which, according to his wife's recipe, he was to drink 'immediately he got in amang the claes.'

When he went to bed, he couldn't sleep; he could only think; and his thoughts wandered back to the day when he won the heart of his old partner Jessie—that proud day; and on and on to the day Molly was born; and then on and on to the day Kate was born; and he remembered a hundred little happy scenes that had happened before that unhappy bag received the first miserable note into its stomach; and then, on and on till suspicion and distrust sprung up between him and those he loved, and all the old happiness passed away, and he saw himself become—ay, and he now described himself to himself in so many words—a mean, old miserly rascal! It surprised him to catch himself thus libelling himself. What had made the change? Had he not just succeeded in putting his money safe, beyond—— Ah! was it safe? How he wished he could know that. And against whom had he desired security? Against Jessie, and Molly, and Kate. Poor dears! How anxious they had been about him in the morning; how they kissed him when they went out, hoping to find him better when they came back. Why, they hadn't kissed him for years; but then he had never before thrown himself on their sympathies. He had chuckled then to think how easily they were deceived. He saw now what a miserable, old, hypocritical wretch he had been. How tenderly they had nursed him, and looked at him, not doing kind things without meaning them. O yes, they loved him—ay, better than his bag; for let him only sicken and die, and wouldn't they have it among them to do with it as they liked. And, after all, what in the world was the use of it but to give pleasure to himself and them? And when, at this stage of his reflections, his wife asked her 'dear auld guidman' how he felt himself now, and, with a kiss, turned away for the night; he nipped his old legs and fixed his teeth at himself, as at a perfect brute; and that same moment, he resolved he'd take the bag into the house next day, and live an open-handed life, to the best of his ability, henceforward. With this came a degree of mental composure, and at last, far towards morning, he fell asleep, and into dreamland.

Everywhere was the bag. In one dream, a lot of boys were playing football with it, tossing it about, giving it kicks that sent it far up into the air, to 'flop' down again with a dead heavy sound; till at last it 'flopped' into a duck-pond, and sank; and all the boys wading in the duck-pond, and himself with them, searching ever so anxiously, could get no trace of it. From this dream, Andrew awakened with a smile. Then he saw it lying in the wooden chest, as of old; and the chest was locked, and down in the front-parlour, as of old; and there came a cry of 'Fire! Fire!' and the house was burning, and he and his wife and daughters just escaped with their lives, but with nothing else; and no one could be found to venture in to take out the old chest, and he stood afar off seeing it burn, and tearing his gray hair in rage and grief. He wakened from this dream also with a smile, for he knew the bag was not in the chest, but safe out in the dike. Then came two little boys in a dream, playing out in the back-garden; he knew them quite well the moment they appeared; and they began to play at hiding toys in the wall and searching for them; and lo! they found the bag, and opened its great big mouth, and took out such heaps of papers, and wondered what they were; when suddenly the wind arose, and caught the heap, and whirled away the whole, and the air was as white with bank-notes as ever it was with snow-flakes in a storm. Andrew wakened gasping: he could stand this sort of thing no longer. The gray dawn was coming in at the window, cold and cheerless. He got up quietly, and with nothing on him but his trousers and shirt, made for the back-door, up the garden, to the wall, to the hole; and there?—The bag was gone!

I am not going to analyse Andrew's feelings on missing the bag—the blankness of his despair as he stared, with drooping head and hanging arms, at the damp old wall in the dull twilight. He returned to bed, after a time, to find his spouse asleep, and quite unconscious of his desertion. For some time, he couldn't think rationally of his loss; after the first paroxysm, however, his good sense gradually asserted itself, and the more he reflected, the stronger grew his hope of getting back his money. Two things were almost quite certain—whoever took the bag must have seen him hide it, and missed, like himself, the discourse of Mr Thumpanbawl; and being satisfied that the absentees from church were few, and could be discovered, he began to lay his plans so as not only to detect the thief, but regain the bag without exposing his own domestic relations, which had led to its concealment, and of which he was now heartily ashamed.

After breakfast, he walked slowly down the main street towards Tibby Johnstone's—the half-way house. Tibby, the leader of the village gossips, was standing at her door as he approached it, and at once proceeded to interrogate him as to his illness.

'Man, I was sorry,' said Tibby, 'ye werena in church yester-morn, more because o' your no being able. Aweel, auld folks *is* auld folks, an' we hae a' the same gate to gang—though a' folk dinna hae to travel sae far's yoursel, Andrew Millar, to reach the end o't. And what was the matter wi' you, noo?' she continued, pressing home her inquiries without giving time for answer. 'Was it the reumatis or the headaches? There was Johnnie Swan was bad, too, yester-morn, an' had to bide at hame like yoursel, poor body: he had the megrums very sair.'

Andrew gave no answer to her question as to the nature of his malady, save by another—put in the tone of one passing: 'I fancy almost everybody was in church but me an' Johnnie.'

Tibby assured him the kirk was 'crammed,' that it was hotter work for the minister than 'mawin' hay in July;' and that he 'watted twa napkins wi' the sweat o' his broo.'

Andrew passed on, as if the conversation had related to matters of perfect indifference. Casual inquiries made elsewhere in the village in the course of the forenoon satisfied him that Johnnie Swan the shoemaker was the thief; at least, that he was the only man who hadn't been at church, and was at all likely to have done the dishonest thing. How, now, to get round Johnnie without exposing himself? Andrew brooded over this problem during three pipes, after which he went straight to the house of the shoemaker.

Johnnie Swan was a dour, ill-favoured, avaricious body of a shoemaker, the leader of the pot-house politicians of the village, and reputed a great theorist and original speculator in morals and philosophy. On the Sunday forenoon, when Andrew hid the bag, our philosopher, who was really indisposed, and unable to go to church, was behind the old wall in a position to see—without being seen—all Andrew's extraordinary proceedings, from the first cautious peep of his nose out of the back-door, to his stealthy slipping into the house again. What Andrew was about he couldn't exactly see, nor did he see the bag; but he thus argued with himself as to the probable meaning of the phenomena which he had witnessed:

'Folks may duffer, but, in ma opinion, 'tisn't for naething the mice come oot. When a sober body like Andrew Millar plays the fule, and syne taks to a hole in an auld dike, like a weasel, there's mair intil't than the air o' the mornin'. Had ye een i' the back o' your head, man, Andrew, ye'd hae missed me yon time, wi' your want o' gumption: ae look ahint the dyke wad ha' done mair for your secret than twunty glowerins ower it. Atweel, there's something in the wind ye'd as weel hae a peep o'; sae gird your loins, ma man, an' inspect the biggin. If there's nae aye a nest whare the pee-weets whurl, ye'll no be the waur o' tryin to find ane.' And with these sagacious observations, Johnnie got over the wall, and commenced a search, which in a short time resulted in the discovery of the bag. Without stopping to inspect its contents, he buttoned his coat over it, and went quietly home, calming what tugs of conscience were in him, by reflecting on the exceptions which prove the rule that honesty is the best policy, and with the following, among other sophisms: 'It's a kind o' treasure-trove, or what-d'ye-call-it. I find it; sae it's a' my ain, an' nain o' my neighbours, as Columbus said when he findit Ameriky. Some folks wadna hae tooken it, an' some folks are fules. Na, na, Johnnie Swan; grup it weel, my man, an' say naething aboot it. Wise folks let the nor' wind come in by the chumley, but open their doors to the sou wind; an' its no ilka day ye'll hae sic a windfall as is noo under your oxters.'

Swan having got home without meeting any one, a brief inspection of his booty satisfied him he had stumbled on a fortune. He had no misgivings as to the way in which he had done so, and, from the circumstance that no one was abroad, and that Andrew hadn't caught him, no fear. He was thwacking a piece of sole-leather on the lapstone on Monday forenoon, when Millar cast his shadow across the door.

'Hoo's a' wi' you the day?' said Andrew cheerfully, but eyeing his man, so as to catch every shade of feeling on his face.

Johnnie was really much discomposed at the unexpected apparition, yet had nerve enough to thwack on at his work, as he looked up, and nodding to Andrew to be seated, answered:

'Gaily an' brawly, neighbour; hoo's a' wi' yoursel?'

Though Andrew was disconcerted by this coolness, he proceeded, in a friendly tone, to make all the ordinary inquiries for 'the wife,' who was out on an errand; for Thomas, who was in a shop in Kilmarnock; and for the girls, who were out at service. After this interchange of commonplaces, Andrew at last advanced to the object of his visit.

'Johnnie,' said he, 'we have been neighbours for mony years noo, an' aye sorted extraordinar weel; an' I've long kent you for a prudent, sensible person, wi' a guid head, forby heart, an' that's hoo I'm come to ask your advice the noo.'

Johnnie began to feel very uncomfortable, and to look steadily at the 'rosin-end' which he had begun to fasten, when conversation made it proper he should lay by the lapstone.

'Ye ken I've made a sort o' siller—atweel, it cost me muckle wark, an' mony years' hainin' to do't; more's the grief noo that I canna keep it safe; but it will be disappearin' in mair ways than I can account for; an' it's hard to a man no to feel safe o' his siller in the midst o' his ain bairns. But that's the fact, Johnnie Swan, though I'm ashamed to state it. So I'm thinkin' o' makin' an investment o't, an' I've come to ask your advice what to do wi't. What ud ye say to layin' it oot on land, Johnnie? If siller's weel laid oot on land, there's aye a guid return, ye ken, forby the feelin' o' bein' a proprietor; an' I was thinkin' that Thamas, that fine grown-up laddie o' your ain, wad mak' a guid steward, wi' a' the schuleing he's gotten.'

Johnnie was sorry to learn that Andrew's wife and daughters couldn't be trusted. It was clear he should invest his money, and land did really appear to be the best thing he could invest it in.

'But then,' said Andrew, starting objections for himself, since his friend was not disposed to start any—'But then, managing farms is a great fash, an' maybe crops'll be bad. The last ha'erst was an uncommon bad one, an' bad crops, bad rents, Johnnie, ye ken. An' after a', I mind Lawyer Meiklecraft tellin' me I'd never get more than 3 per cent. for my siller from land. Deed, I think I winna lay it oot on land.'

'After a', freen,' said Johnnie, 'it's your ain affair, an' nane o' your neighbours'.'

He could hardly keep from laughing at this stage to hear Andrew debating with himself how he should dispose of money that was now out of his power, and, in fact, in the drawer of the stool he was then sitting upon; his sense of the ridiculous was all the livelier that he saw that Andrew, so far from suspecting him, was not even aware of his loss.

'What d'ye say, noo, to layin' some o't oot on a ship?' said Andrew, proceeding with the investigation.

Johnnie's tongue was loose now, and in five minutes he pictured Andrew as a great ship-owner, enriched with all the treasures of the Indies. 'Ay, ay, neighbour, lay't oot on a ship. I'se warrant, ye might do waur than lay't oot on a ship.'

But ships sink, and are exposed to a variety of accidents not to be provided against; a single gale blows away a hundred fortunes. Andrew concluded not to lay it out on a ship.

A great many other plans were considered, to the great amusement of Johnnie, who could hardly keep his gravity. But Andrew was now about done with him: he had clearly given him to feel that he thought the amount of his money sufficient for the purchase of almost anything; and now he proceeded to end the interview by a further proof of his confidence.

'Weel, weel, we'll give it up, my friend, the noo, for we mak' no more o't than I used to, weighin' the matter by mysel; an' I'll tell ye what I hae done wi' the siller in the meantime. To stop thae rapagious daughters o' mine, I divided the siller the ither day into twa parts: the sma' ane I hae hidden where naebody'll fin' it; an' the ither is what I hae been thinkin' o' makin' an investment o'; an' that I'll noo haud in my ain hans, an' put into hidin' the morn wi' the rest, where it'll be snug while we tak' oor time to think what to do wi't.

Johnnie forgot himself altogether in applauding this plan; and when Andrew left him, he was quite beside himself with high spirits, looking to the brilliant future which was, as he imagined, dawning upon him. He played a tattoo upon his lapstone, whistling while he did it; he pitched the lapstone at the cat; missed her, and smashed a pitcher that stood near the door, full of water, which instantly flooded the floor. He gave a kick to the only chair in the room, which broke it; and then he rid himself of a good deal of his surplus energy by leaping over and over the fragments. It was some time, and not till he had worked a world of mischief on the premises, before he settled down with a pipe calmly to consider his position. 'He were blinder nor me,' he reflected, 'that didna see Providence in this matter. I'm no for judgin' the purpose, but doubtna this thing is na befa'in' Andrew for nought. The man's geyt. It's what the schulemaister ca's the Nemesis—settin' ane up to chop him doon like. Mysel's been hauden doon long enow, an' belike that's the meanin' o' this upturn. Ony gate, he's a fule wad steal the clockin' egg whan the hen's comin' to lay a guid ane: so I'se e'en tak care Andrew finds the wee bag in the nest when he comes to hide the muckle.' And so he resolved to restore the leather bag to its hiding-place in the night-time, not doubting but the night following he would carry away the whole store.

Next morning, Andrew was up betimes, and out into the garden, and to the wall, and to the hole, and there, sure enough, was the leather bag, all safe and sound!

The little gray man gave three cheers as he carried it into the house in triumph. Meeting his wife on the stairs, he surprised her by joyously bouncing at her, and kissing her. He thrust the leather bag into her hands, crying: 'There, there; keep it, keep it!' He ran into the kitchen, and kissed Molly and Kate, who were cooking the breakfast. They couldn't understand him; he quite puzzled all three of them. Why go further with the story? He told them all about it—the whole history of the bag; and as he did so, the black demon of disunion sullenly left his dwelling. His money was thereafter 'made an investment o',' under good advice; and from that day there wasn't, in fact, as there wasn't for a long time before, in reputation, a happier family in all Ayrshire than that of Andrew Millar.

Johnnie Swan's reflections, after losing three nights' rest sitting up to pay visits at unearthly hours to the hole in the wall, and satisfying himself that he had been overreached, were still philosophical, if not complimentary to himself, and are worthy of being put on record. 'Let me tell ye, you 're a fool, Johnnie Swan—a blin' idiot. Is na the nest-egg better than nane? and ae burd i' the han' worth twa i' the bush? Ye sud hae been contentit, my man. Modesty 's the best policy for a rogue on a sma' scale; an' I hae kent a chiel hangit, who 'd been nane the waur had the stolen cow been a calf. It 's a shame to your understandin'; and to haud your mug up again to the man wha kens ye for baith a rogue and an ass is mair than ye can do.'

He kept out of Andrew's way for a long time, and at last came to hope that, after all, Millar had been serious with him, and had merely changed the hiding-place for a new one. He was not long in this hope, however, before he was undeceived. Meeting Andrew one day by accident in the fields, he saluted him in the old style, as if nothing was wrong between them, when Andrew, with a queer grin, bursting into a loud laugh as he finished the sentence, asked him: 'What d'ye say noo to layin' some o 't oot on a ship?'

Johnnie couldn't stand it: he made off precipitately; and a few days after, the sensitive philosopher left the parish a legacy of his old wife, and disappeared no one knew whither.

JOHN MILTON.

The work now before us bears the title of *The Life of Milton, narrated in connection with the Political, Ecclesiastical, and Literary History of his Times.* The reader may therefore naturally expect a very voluminous production. Equally minute in its details, as comprehensive in its plan, its author has written with a determination to leave nothing unsaid which could, however remotely, bear upon the character or writings of Milton. This anxiety to exhaust his subject has led him here and there into details which appear altogether superfluous; as when, for instance, *apropos* of the poet's entrance upon his college career, we have lists given us of students entering Cambridge at the same time, lists of heads of colleges, accounts of contemporaries, uninteresting in themselves, and having apparently little or no personal connection with Milton to recommend them to notice. Of such a work as this it would be impossible in our brief space to take a complete survey: we shall content ourselves with dwelling upon those passages in the early life of our great poet which have received additional illustration from the pen of Mr Masson.

John Milton was born on the 9th of December 1608, in Bread Street in the city of London. His father was a scrivener, and a man of respectably long descent—the Spread Eagle which figured as the sign of his shop, being, Mr Masson thinks, probably adopted with reference to the armorial bearings of his family. But what was of more importance, the scrivener was 'a man of the utmost integrity;' and being remarkable for industry and prudence, he soon became a man of substance. Of Milton's mother, after the most diligent research, little can be known; the only personal peculiarity we hear of is, that 'she had very weak eyes, and used spectacles presently after she was thirty years old.' Her son speaks of her as 'a most excellent mother, and well known for her charities to the poor around.'

Of one of our great poets, it may at least be said that circumstances were propitious to the cultivation of his mind and his devotion to letters. His father, himself an 'ingeniose man,' early appreciated his son's great ability. The home in Bread Street where Milton grew up, with one sister a good deal older, and one brother a good deal younger, than himself, appears to have been a happy one. The Puritan scrivener, grave man as he doubtless was, had a special talent for music, and some of his compositions have come down even to our own day. An organ and other instruments formed part of his household furniture, and much of his spare time was devoted to them. Likewise, he had certain poetical aspirations, though little poetical success; witness an absurd complimentary sonnet to a friendly poetaster of the day, which Mr Masson preserves for us. We may therefore easily imagine how proud such a parent must have felt of his son John, 'wondrous from his birth,' and already a poet at the age of ten, when his picture was taken by a young and rising Dutch painter. A very charming picture it is, of a grave and earnest little boy with auburn hair, cut close in Roundhead fashion, to meet the taste, as it appears, of his tutor, Thomas Young, a Scotchman by birth, and a well-known Puritan divine, of whom his pupil always wrote with utmost affection and respect. Having, as Milton floridly expresses it in a Latin elegy, 'under this guidance explored the recesses of the muses, quaffed Pierian cups, and sprinkled his mouth with Castalian wine,' he was sent, at the age of twelve, to St Paul's School, one of the most flourishing of the day. Here he studied only too closely, according to all accounts. We quote his own: 'My father destined me, while yet a little boy, for the study of humane letters, which I seized with such eagerness, that, from the twelfth year of my age, I scarcely ever went from my lessons before midnight, which, indeed, was the first cause of injury to my eyes, to whose natural weakness there were also added frequent headaches.' Alas! and his mother's sight was weak and failing too. 'The pity of it!—the pity of it,' even though this 'insuperable industry' rendered him, at the age of fifteen, full ripe for academical training.

Milton, like every promising boy, had a special school *chum*. During these busy years, we find that Carlo Diodati, nephew of the Genevese divine whose Italian version of the Scriptures has made the name familiar to us, appears to have been a bright-minded and warm-hearted companion; and the intimacy continued up to the time of his death, though their college careers separated the friends—Diodati being sent to Oxford, Milton, in 1625, to Cambridge. Tradition still points out his rooms at Christ's College—so, at least, says Wordsworth, who, by his own confession, for the first and last time in his life, drank too much at a wine-party given within those consecrated walls! The rooms consist of a small study and a very small bedroom; but, judging from the uncomfortable customs of that day, it is most probable that the poet had one or more 'chamber-fellows' in those close quarters. College-life, though already considerably relaxed as to discipline, was a good deal more strict then than now, and to rigid rules severe penalties were attached. In Milton's case, some dispute with a harsh tutor appears to have taken place; but it did not materially influence his position at college. When, in after-years, his republican politics had rendered his name odious to the university, this dispute or quarrel, or whatever it was, became exaggerated into a sentence of rustication. Mr Masson goes minutely into the often-repeated story that Milton was one of the last who received personal castigation at his college. The result of the inquiry, however, leaves the matter very obscure—so obscure, that we are justified in following the tendency we must all feel, simply to dismiss the disagreeable subject from our mind.

There is good reason to assume that, during part of the long vacation at least, Milton resided in London with his parents, and it is not uninteresting to hear of the manner in which he probably travelled there. In his day, Cambridge boasted a noted carrier and job-master, Thomas Hobson by name, to whom Milton took a great fancy, and on the occasion of whose death he wrote two long epitaphs in the quaint style then in vogue. Old Hobson was indeed a fine old worthy, making the journey from Cambridge to London and back again weekly, though he was eighty years old, and being the first man in England to devise the convenient system of keeping and hiring out hack-horses. Of these he kept forty always ready for the road, and whenever a customer came, the rule was that he should take the one that chanced to stand nearest the stable door. Hence the proverb we have perhaps all of us used, without knowing very exactly its origin—'Hobson's choice; this or nothing.'

In 1632, Milton took his M.A. degree, and closed a seven years' career at the university. During it, he is reputed to have been a very hard student, still 'sitting up till midnight at his book,' and bearing away an extraordinary reputation. He was a noble Latinist, evidently acquainted too with Greek and Hebrew, well versed in logic and philosophy, and master of an immense amount of general information. Nevertheless, he does not seem to have looked back with much enthusiastic fondness to his Alma Mater, or to have been at any time blind to defects in her system. Mr Masson has industriously collected several of his academic exercises, as throwing much light on his youthful character; but we prefer to dwell on the outward appearance the young poet wore. 'In stature,' he himself tells us, he was not tall, though still nearer to middle height than to little; 'though why should that be called little which is great enough for virtue.' With 'light-brown hair,' 'complexion exceeding fair, face oval, his eye a dark gray,' no wonder that, to use his own words, 'so far as he knew, he had never been thought ugly by any one who had seen him.' It was probably his brilliancy of colouring, and the long light locks that fell to his ruff on each side of his face, that won for him the epithet of 'the lady of Christ's.' Perhaps, too, it may have been partly owing to his purity of character and conduct. At all events, there was nothing effeminate about him; on the contrary, we are told that his gait was erect and manly, bespeaking courage and undauntedness. 'The prevailing tone of his mind consisted in a deep and habitual seriousness.' For 'festivities and jests,' he 'acknowledges his faculty to be very slight.' Withal, he by no means lacked that noble self-confidence which insures success, 'was esteemed' by his contemporaries 'not to be ignorant of his own parts.' Resolved to be a poet, his firm opinion was, that 'he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem.' Resolved to be a poet, we say, for although, when first sent to Cambridge, it had been with the intention that he should enter the church, that intention was changed before he took his Master's degree. He had far too much sympathy with the Puritans—at this time, grievously harassed by Laud—to carry it out; and though there is evidence that he once thought of the law, his love of letters was too absorbing to allow him to enter that profession either. Eloquence and poetry became his profession. We cannot, however, wonder that his father was at first a little dissatisfied with such a resolve, though he appears soon to have yielded to his son's arguments in its favour. By this time, the old man had retired from business, and was living upon the fortune he had realised, in the village of Horton, in Buckinghamshire. Here, his son tells us, 'I, with every advantage of leisure, spent a complete holiday in turning over the Greek and Latin writers; not without sometimes exchanging the country for the town, either for the purpose of buying books, or for that of learning something new in mathematics or in music, in which sciences I then delighted.' This love of music it was which led to Milton's intimacy with Henry Lawes, already well known as a composer, much employed as teacher of music to the noble and the wealthy, and having a special appointment of this kind in the family of the Earl of Bridgewater. Of him more anon.

The house at Horton in which Milton lived has disappeared; tradition tells us that it was taken down about sixty years ago, but still points to its site. The old church and its yew-trees are still much what they were when the youthful poet sat there with his father and mother; and the visitor, standing in the chancel, may still read on a plain blue stone laid flat on its floor the simple record that tells of that mother's death. She died in the April of 1637—not from the plague, which was then ravaging the village, but possibly owing to the singularly trying season which preceded its outbreak.

It was during the first two years and a half of Milton's quiet country-life at Horton that he wrote his second sonnet, that to the *Nightingale*, his *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, his *Arcades*, and his *Comus*. It is in connection with the last two poems that we have to return to Mr Henry Lawes.

In the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, and throughout that of her successor, masques were the prevailing form private theatricals took. The best talents of the day ran into that channel. Ben Jonson, Shirley, Carew, would furnish the poetry; Inigo Jones undertake the management of the machinery and decorations; Mr Henry Lawes compose the airs, songs, and superintend the musicians. The spring of 1634 was distinguished by two specially famous masques—one of them given by the four Inns of Court, at an expense of L.21,000. Now, Milton's younger brother being then a student of the Inner Temple, as well as his friend Lawes musical manager, it is very probable that the poet was a spectator on this gorgeous occasion. At all events, in this very year, he himself came forward as the author of two masques, for which Lawes wrote the accompaniment, and which were performed under his management by the younger members of the Bridgewater family. Of these, the first, *Arcades*, is but a slight affair; with the second, one of Milton's most exquisite and popular poems, we have long been familiar under the title of *Comus;* but in the two first editions of Milton's works it is simply called '*A Mask presented at Ludlow Castle.*' Originally, too, it was anonymous; and though rumours of its great excellence, travelling far and wide, awoke curiosity as to the name of the author, this appears to have been unknown, except to Lawes, and, perhaps, to his noble pupils. How great must have been Milton's confidence in his own powers of accomplishing in the future greater things still, when he could thus afford to leave such a work unclaimed! 'What music must have filled the soul that had so much to spare.' Nearly three years had passed since the performance of the masque, and still it was unpublished, and might have remained so longer, but that Henry Lawes found so generally admired a production troublesome to possess. He was so constantly applied to for copies of the manuscript, or of certain songs in it, that at length, to save himself from the labour of transcribing these, he resolved to have the whole printed. To this Milton consented, and revised the original copy. The masque was accordingly published in Lawes's name, in a small quarto form, and dedicated to young Lord Brackley, one of the actors at its first representation.

Whether Milton wrote his next poem, *Lycidas*, at

Horton or in London, remains uncertain. However, the time and the circumstances of its composition are both well ascertained, and interesting in themselves. Edward King, of Christ's College, Cambridge, a worthy friend of Milton's, 'strict and pious, gentle and amiable,' had perished, with nearly the whole of the ship's crew, one fine summer evening, on his way from Chester to Dublin, a few days after Ben Jonson's death. The vessel had struck on a rock, and foundered near to shore, young King calmly kneeling on the deck in prayer, and so going down. Some thirty or forty of the wits and scholars of England at large clubbed together to produce a volume of elegies in Greek, Latin, and English, to the memory of Ben. The wits and scholars of Cambridge determined upon offering a similar tribute to the memory of Edward King, and Milton was invited to contribute. The collection of poems thus made consisted of twenty-three pieces in Latin and Greek, and thirteen in English. Milton's monody closes the volume, and contrasts startlingly with the execrable trash that precedes it. Mr Masson gives us specimens from each of twelve fellow-contributors. We select the opening lines of the last two of their attempts:

> Weep forth your tears, then; pour out all your tide.
> All waters are pernicious since King died.

And again:

> Then quit thine own, thou western moor,
> And haste thee to the northern shore;
> I' the Irish Sea one jewel lies,
> Which thy whole cabinets outvies.

But we do not need the jar of such doggerel to enhance the charm of the familiar music that succeeds:

> Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
> Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
> I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
> And, with forced fingers rude,
> Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.

In the spring of 1638, Milton was preparing to leave Horton for a journey on the continent. He had long wished this, but had found some slight difficulty in obtaining his father's consent. However, the good old man gave in, as he had done before with regard to Milton's literary career; and it is pleasant to know that he was not left alone during this beloved son's absence. Christopher Milton, the young law-student, had just married, and, with his bride, taken up his quarters in his father's house. We may therefore assume that old Milton's means must have been very comfortable, thus to allow him to incur additional expense at home, and, at the same time, to gratify his eldest son's wish of seeing Italy. John Milton, taking a man-servant with him, cannot, as Mr Masson calculates, have required less than L.200 a year of the money of that day. Well for him—well, too, for England—that his father was both affluent and liberal, and that he could thus afford to lead a life of study and self-culture without any necessity of forcing his genius, and writing for money. It does not appear that he ever earned a penny by his works till he was about thirty-two years of age.

Well provided with letters of introduction, our poet crossed the Channel in April 1638. In Paris he became acquainted with Grotius, who 'took his visit kindly, and gave him entertainment suitable to his worth;' but his stay there was short; his heart was set upon Italy—Italy, with her great men, her music, her arts, and her sky. Thither he hurried on, and there for the present we leave him, where the close of Mr Masson's first volume (the only one out as yet) leaves him, under, perhaps, life's pleasantest circumstances—young, honoured, and honourable—a poet and a tourist in the sweet south! What ecstasy for him in the

> To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new!

BLUCHER'S JUDGMENT.

Few were the youths throughout the kingdom of Prussia that were allowed to stay at home in the eventful year of 1813. A war, more terrible, more vindictive than any one that had ever visited the continent of Europe, was raging through the land, and the country could spare none of its defenders. Also the king had called his people to arms by means of that famous proclamation which will be considered for evermore as one of the noblest documents in German history. They were true to the call—old and young; they left their homes, rushed to the colours, took up arms, and never laid them down till they had driven the enemy under the very walls of Paris.

The inhabitants of Silesia, well known for their loyalty and patriotism, had not stood behind amidst the general enthusiasm. There was not a family in the province that had not contributed its contingent to the national affair; and many a heart was throbbing painfully whenever a new intelligence was spread of another of those dreadful battles which, by ridding the country from an odious enemy, threw sorrow and affliction upon many a quiet and peaceable home.

On a sultry summer evening, in the year before mentioned, an old woman was sitting before her humble cottage in the little Silesian village of Burnheim. She had put the distaff aside, and was reading the Bible, which lay opened on her knees. Whilst she was repeating the holy words in an under-tone to herself, her ears caught the sound of quick footsteps, and a long shadow emerged from behind the cottage. The old woman trembled violently: the moment afterwards, her uplifted eyes fell upon the figure of a handsome and well-made lad, in a military attire.

'How are you, mother?'

She rose, and threw her trembling arms round his neck. 'God be thanked, my boy, that I see thee again! But how pale and haggard thou lookest.' She went on, after a pause: 'To be sure, thou must be very tired, and very hungry too!'

She led him in the room to the old arm-chair, and urged him to sit down and repose himself a little, whilst she herself would prepare him some supper.

'What did he like best? Should she make him an omelet, or roast a chicken? Oh, it was no trouble at all! Dear me, how could he talk of trouble? she was but too glad to do anything for her own dear boy. Yes, she would go and get him a chicken.'

The old woman, all bustle and activity, left the room.

The youth did not betray so much pleasure at this hearty reception from his aged parent, as might have been expected. He was restless, and ill at ease; it seemed as if something was heavily weighing upon his heart; and when his wandering eye fell upon the portrait of his deceased father, which was hanging right over the chimney-piece, presenting that worthy gentleman in the stiff uniform worn by the king's *garde du corps* half a century ago, he felt as if the old sergeant was looking at him with a grim frown upon his honest countenance; just as if he experienced a hearty inclination to step out of his worm-eaten, rosewood frame, to seize the old knotted hazel-stick in the corner, with the brass nob at top, and to apply it to the back of his offspring for half an hour or so; as, in fact, he had been in the habit of doing, many a day in his lifetime, some eight or ten years ago. His restless son felt so much overcome by this latter reflection that, when the old woman came bustling in again, after the lapse of some minutes, with the chicken under her apron, she found her own dear boy with his head in his hands, leaning listlessly upon the table.

He sat up when she came in, but did not look at her. The old woman became attentive. In the joy of her heart, she had never thought yet of asking him any questions except those concerning his appetite. Now, it began to strike her that the present period was rather a strange time for a soldier to be on leave of absence.

'Charles!'—No answer.

The old woman trembled violently. She dropped her burden, and walked straight up to him. Her honest, wrinkled countenance was full of anxiety and apprehension. Looking him full in the face, and clapping her hands together, she cried out in an agony: 'So help me God, Charles, you are a deserter!'

'I couldn't stand it any longer, mother,' uttered her wretched son, in a broken voice, by way of apology.

'You couldn't stand it!' said the old woman, exasperated beyond all measure; 'you couldn't stand it! and hundreds of thousands of your brethren do! Fy, for shame!' and with her old, honest, trembling hand, she gave him a smack on the face.

'Mother!' exclaimed the young man starting up, with the blood rushing to his face.

'Fy, for shame!' she went on, without heeding him in the least, 'to bring such a disgrace upon the whole village! What would *he* say?'—she pointed to where the old warrior was hanging over the chimney-piece, whose stern countenance, illuminated by the rays of the evening sun, seemed indeed to assume an unusual expression of solemn indignation. 'Sit down, sit down, I say! you—deserter! It shall not be said that your dead father's house, in the village of Burnheim, is a place of refuge for runaways, whilst the whole country is up in arms! Don't you stir, sir! I'll be back in a minute;' and with this, the brave old woman left the room, locking the door after her.

She was not alone when she came back about half an hour afterwards; the country parson, the schoolmaster, the country judge, and half a dozen more of the dignitaries of the village, were with her. The little room was quite full when all these distinguished visitors had entered it. Charles sat in the old arm-chair, quite motionless, his face covered with both his hands.

The honest villagers had made up their minds at once what to do with the deserter; they looked upon his crime as an ignominy, by which he had not only disgraced himself, but also their community at large, and they were not the men to put up with such an affront. The schoolmaster, who was a politician, and subscribed to a newspaper, having informed them that the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief of the army were but about two days' march from the village, they had resolved at once to escort him thither. The judge proclaimed the young man a prisoner in the name of his majesty the king, and called upon him to follow him to a place of security for the night, as on the following morning they would in a body convey him to his excellency the field-marshal, General Blucher. He rose, and followed them without opposition. When they were all gone, the old woman took up the Holy Scriptures once more; but it was in vain that she strove to read; her eyes grew dim, and the letters were all swimming confusedly before them, so she put it down again, and wept bitterly.

Early on the following morning, a strange procession was seen emerging from the little village of Burnheim—four old peasants escorting one young soldier. The country judge, with grave airs, marched ahead of them, whilst the schoolmaster, who had obstinately insisted upon accompanying the expedition, brought up the rear. The prisoner, with downcast eyes and fallen countenance, was walking between the two other patriots; and as he had pledged his word not to make any attempt at flight, they had consented to leave his hands untied. When the expedition, after a day's march, put up for the night in a small hamlet, they were told that all the villages around were crammed full with Frenchmen, so they were obliged to make a long roundabout way; and it was not before the morning of the fifth day after their departure, that they reached head-quarters.

'Where is the residence of the commander-in-chief?' asked they of one of the ordnance-officers, who were galloping through the streets in every direction.

'Why, in the château, to be sure, where the two hussars were mounting guard on horseback.'

When they had entered the yard, they were not in the least discouraged at the sight of whole scores of adjutants, and orderly-officers of every rank and arm, all of whom seemed to have some urgent business with the commander-in-chief; for no sooner had any of them been despatched, than he was seen mounting again, and tearing away with his horse's belly to ground. It never entered their heads for one moment that the general might consider their own business to be of a somewhat smaller importance, although the schoolmaster argued from what he saw that something of consequence was going on just now. The worthy man was right so far; the commander-in-chief was about to give battle on the following day. When they had been waiting patiently for a couple of hours, and began to feel somewhat tired and hungry, the country judge, conscious of the importance of his mission, ventured at last to accost one of the officers of the general's staff who was passing by with a packet of sealed letters in his hand; but that hasty functionary did not even stop to give ear to the address of the head man of the rural deputation, but merely grumbled something about the propriety of their going to Jericho—or further.

Our worthy inhabitants of Burnheim, however, were not the men to give way so soon, and renewed the charge accordingly. This time it was a middle-aged man with a benevolent countenance, whom they made acquainted with their request to see the field-marshal on most urgent business.

'Why, they had chosen their time rather badly, indeed; the general was extremely busy. Couldn't one of the secretaries do as well?'

'By no means; they must see the general himself.'

'Was it an information concerning the enemy which they wanted to deliver?'

'O no; something much more important—from Burnheim,' added the schoolmaster.

The middle-aged officer with the benevolent countenance laughed, and said he would try. After the lapse of about half an hour, he came back, and beckoned to them to follow. They were ushered into an ante-room, and directed to wait for his excellency.

The door opened after another half-hour's waiting, and an old man with gray hairs, iron-cut features, and bright eyes, entered the room; it was the commander-in-chief, *Old Father Blucher*, as the soldiers called him. The country judge stepped forward, and bowing very low, delivered the speech about which he had been pondering ever since they had left their native place, and which, of course, he thought to be very eloquent. He stated all that has been told already in the course of this narrative: how the deserter's own mother had given information of her son's crime; how they had resolved at once to bring him back to head-quarters; and concluded his address with a hope that his excellency would not be induced to think worse of their village because of one that had rendered himself unworthy of the name of a Prussian. The tears came trickling down his honest cheeks.

The general looked very grave indeed. Those large bright eyes of his roamed for an instant over his rural audience with a strange expression. He knew at a glance what sort of men they were he had to deal with; then his looks rested for a while on the bent figure of the young man, who, with downcast eyes and care-worn face, appeared the very image of misery and dejection. He knew his case to be a hopeless one; deserting colours in time of war is a capital crime, and Father Blucher, with his iron will, was the last man in the world to be trifled with.

On a sudden, the features of the old hero assumed an expression of harshness. Turning round towards the speaker of this singular deputation, he said in a rough voice and in a very abrupt manner: 'Mr Judge, you are an ass.'

The villagers started as if they had been stung. After all the anxiety and trouble they had undergone for the cause which they considered to be a just one, they had expected a somewhat more cordial reception.

'But your excellency'—— remonstrated the amazed dignitary.

'Hold your tongue, I say; you are an ass. I know better: *in Burnheim there are no runaways.* And you, my son,' he went on with his iron features relenting a little, and with that same strange expression in his large bright eyes, 'you will shew them to-morrow, on the battle-field, what a Burnheim-man can do; will you not?'

The young man dropped down on his knees, and was stammering a few broken words, which the general did not hear, however, for when the lad rose again with high flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes—a far different man—Blucher had already left the room.

The worthy peasants, whose perceptive faculties were by no means equal to their honesty, began at last to get a glimpse of the general's real meaning. The country judge was the first to throw his cap high into the air, and to give three hearty cheers for Father Blucher; who, with one single word, had extinguished what they considered a stain from their beloved village, comforted the broken heart of a mother, and preserved a pair of arms for the defence of the country—arms that could not fail to do their duty now.

When they had given vent to their enthusiasm after their hearts' content, and taken leave of the young man, who was carried away by an aid-de-camp of the general's staff, they made up their minds to buy some provisions in the place, and to return again to the village. They had, however, scarcely reached the yard, when they were overtaken by the same middle-aged officer who had announced them to the commander-in chief, and asked them what in Heaven's name they were going to do now.

'Why, going back again, to be sure. To Burnheim, you know!' elucidated the schoolmaster.

And did they think that his excellency would allow anybody to leave head-quarters without having had a dinner first? He had already given orders to that effect, and they had but to follow this non-commissioned officer here, who would shew them the way.

They needed not to be told twice, we may be sure; and when they were shewn into a kitchen-room, where dinner was served up for them, with a bottle of wine standing before each cover, they felt very grateful to his excellency, and very proud at the same time because of the honour shewn to the representatives of their village. But when each of them found a double Frederick's d'or under his plate, their enthusiasm burst out afresh, and many were the healths drunk to the welfare of Old Father Blucher.

When they had all eaten and drunk their fill, and were about to take their leave, they fell in once more with their friend the middle-aged officer, who gave them some advice concerning the best way of reaching their village without running any danger; for, as he said, the coming day would be an eventful one. He accompanied them through the yard to the gateway, where he bade them farewell, pointing, as he left, to one of the hussars who was mounting guard on horseback before the gate.

By heavens, it was their prisoner, the boy Charles, now fully pardoned by his excellency the commander-in-chief. How proud he looked, with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes! He dared not address them, for he was on duty; but he looked at them, as much as to say: 'Wait, and you shall see to-morrow!'

Nor was he faithless to the vow. On the evening of the following day, the memorable 26th of August, when the bloody victory at the Katzbach was gained, and the field-marshal rode through the thinned ranks of his men, who greeted him with enthusiastic cheers, he was addressed by the commanding-officer of the 21st Hussars; who reported, how greatly the private Charles Fisher had distinguished himself above all the rest, having taken a standard from the enemy, and made prisoner, with his own hands, the commander of the French regiment.

The field-marshal stopped his horse, and taking the iron cross from his own uniform, and affixing it, with his own hands, to the breast of the young man, said, with a cheerful voice, and with that same strange expression in his large bright eyes: 'Well done, my son! I knew I was right: *in Burnheim there are no runaways!*'

TRAVELLING IN NATAL.

Those who leave England for the first time in days of express railway trains, may chance to find colonial travelling to be a marvellously strange piece of business. Putting out of the question the saddle, which is, after all, the main resource for personal locomotion in every young colony, the Englishman who lands in Natal, for instance, soon makes the discovery that by a short three months' Atlantic voyage, he has sailed back in time, even beyond the period when the *fast light coach* ran from London to Oxford in a couple of days. Such a fast light coach in this colony would be hailed as a marvel of high civilisation. The distance between D'Urban, the port of Natal, and Maritzburg, its capital city, is fifty-four miles, and these fifty-four miles can with difficulty be traversed by the only carriage at the command of the wayfarer in *three* days. Such carriage consists of a long narrow canvas-tented wagon on four wheels, dragged by a span of a dozen or fourteen big-horned African oxen. A strong drag-chain is passed forward from the wagon, between each pair of the sturdy quadrupeds, which are ranged in double file; and transverse bars of wood cross the drag-chain, with descending prongs at either end, to fork each over the neck of its own particular beast. The prongs, when adjusted astride of the oxen's necks, are fastened beneath by thongs of stout hide: the drag-chain, prongs, and thongs, constitute the entire harness of the equipage. When the oxen are to be attached to the vehicle, they are driven into a line, and caught in pairs, by means of sliding loops of rhinoceros thong, cast over the horns, and drawn tight. When the team is outspanned, the thongs are cast loose, the forked yokes jerked up, and the fourteen emancipated quadrupeds march off into the free expanse of the continent of Africa, which lies spread out before them, to be beaten up from their selected feeding-ground when they are wanted on the morrow. Sometimes it proves that one beast, more adventurous than its fellows, has rambled to the north, or to the south, or to the east, or to the west, and it then has to be sought at the expense of many hours' exploration of hillsides and ravines, before the journey can be resumed. Generally, however, the mere instinctive sense that South Africa is the land of the lion and the leopard, keeps the team in compact order, although those fanciers of ox-flesh are now very rarely seen in settled British territory. The treck-oxen are only tethered together by their horns for the night, when some special need for punctual progress is pressing upon the driver. The South African traveller who has ordered that his wagon shall be in advancing trim at the hour of six in the morning, may think himself fortunate on the whole if he finds himself really in movement a couple of hours before noon; a change, however, which does not prove to be of much practical importance, since not more than five or six hours out of the twenty-four are devoted to the actual treck.

The African wagon is an elaborate production of developed skill, notwithstanding the rudeness of its appearance. A well-constructed vehicle costs not less than a hundred pounds, although it is without any of the refinements of ornament, and rests honestly and solidly upon its axle-trees, without the intervention of springs. The great art in the construction of these carriages consists in rendering them yielding as well as strong. The wagon wriggles like a snake as it runs down a rough slope. The several parts of the sub-structure are connected together by a complex system of pivots, which are at once loose and powerful. The destination of the vehicle is chiefly a wild country, where the name of Macadam is never sounded, and where the paving has been effected by nature herself, without any aid from the ram or hammer.

The driver of the wagon sometimes walks by the side of his team, and sometimes sits upon a kind of driving-box in front, keeping up a constant intercourse with his beasts; now by means of his voice, and now by means of a long tapering thong, mounted upon the end of a lofty bamboo stem. He has no other control over his oxen than such as these two influences furnish. The driving is consequently of a somewhat less precise kind than that which is seen upon London Bridge, or in Cornhill, during the busy hours of the day. The ordinary rate of travelling is about three miles an hour; and while this is maintained, the wagon moves over boulders and through ruts sedately and steadily enough. But every now and then, a fit of go-ahead furor seizes the driver; the long whip is clutched from its resting-place by the side of the wagon; its streaming thong is given to the winds, and amidst resounding cracks, and scarcely less startling articulate objurgations, made up of about an equal moiety of native Caffre and Dutch—a composite language which African oxen seem to understand perfectly—the beasts take to a heavy and inexorable trot, and perhaps for a third of a mile, carry the wagon pell-mell over stones, rocks, and whatever inequalities chance to lie in the route. In the writer's first practical experience of South African wagon-travelling, he was compelled, by illness, to take refuge in the vehicle some fourteen miles from D'Urban. having started on horseback before it, to ride up to Maritzburg. He had been informed that the high road between the port and the capital was so good, that 'a carriage-and-four might be driven with ease the whole way along it.' Relying upon this assurance, one wagon had been packed principally with scientific instruments of considerable value, and not to be replaced, in case of accident, without a delay of half a year. This frail and costly freight had been given in charge to a steady driver, with instructions to carry it up to Maritzburg at his leisure. The invalided owner of the instruments was picked up on the second day of the journey within the treasure-laden vehicle, and put away under the wagon-tent, on the top of the telescopes, barometers, and other equally frangible apparatus, to be himself personally a witness of the treatment they received.

It will be imagined what the reflections of the disabled passenger, thus accommodated, were, on the occasion of the first spurt of briskness which the oxen took upon the fine 'carriage-and-four' Maritzburg road. In the second minute of the run, the broad wheels on one side went over a boulder of trap the size of a man's head, and the ton and a half of freight came down with a crash that seemed to the apprehensive ear to contain in itself the tones of a couple of million of fragments. The invalid reclining above, turned over on his back, and closed his eyes. Dr Livingstone talks of the pleasant stillness that creeps over the spirit when a lion gives you a friendly shake by the nape of the neck. A philosopher sitting upon the instrumental preparations that, with the expenditure of much care and forethought, he has made for an extended campaign of investigation, is, in a South African wagon, upon a South African road, very much in the same predicament. With the first paroxysm of vibration, the granite enters into his soul; all further consideration of consequences or care for results is literally shaken out of his head, and he calmly looks the long vista of boulder-covered road before him in the face, as if it did not import savage and barbarous destruction.

Few persons travel by wagon in South Africa without having at least one saddle-horse in attendance. When the vehicle merely carries the *impedimenta* and the necessaries of the journey—perhaps adding thereto the luxury of a tent for pitching upon the camping-ground—the short daily journey is itself performed upon horseback, and the mode of travelling is agreeable enough. A wagon at rest, snugly covered in by its weather-tight canvas awning, with a closely laced curtain before and behind, and with a mattress and warm skins stretched on the top of its heavier baggage, is altogether a different affair from a wagon in motion. Old colonists know how to make their house upon four wheels far more comfortable than the fixed houses of call that are to be met with upon the wayside. Canvas pockets along the interior, and padlocked boxes on the outside, are well stored with supplies, according to the fancy and the need of the individual. Upon the high road between D'Urban and Maritzburg, there is, however, not much occasion to draw upon these resources, as there are three houses of public entertainment where very tolerable accommodation is offered, and where the traveller may make himself quite comfortable, if he do not mind somewhat narrow quarters, nor despise a common room for use in the daytime.

A journey on horseback in Natal is performed at the rate of about six miles an hour, the horse alternately walking and cantering, or making a fast colonial shuffle, which is designated *tripling*. The rule of the road, for one who wants to get on, is to canter wherever cantering is possible. If only a dozen yards before you are practicable, canter that dozen yards, and then subside into a walk, when your regard for your neck compels you to draw in. Never lose an opportunity because it is comprised within narrow limits. The small, and by no means magnificent-looking African horses, with hoofs innocent of iron, very commonly get through fifty miles a day with this kind of proceeding, having no other feeding than the coarse forage yielded by the uncultured pasture, and accomplishing the distance in about ten hours. The slow pace, the incessant change from the walk to the canter, or the triple, and the easy movement of the gentle canter itself, render a journey of fifty miles at a stretch by no means so formidable an undertaking as it may seem to the fast and trot-accustomed English rider. But the newly arrived colonist, who has been used to the saddle in England, has to chafe a great deal before he can subside into the proper colonial pace.

Where there is much wagon-traffic, a bare road is soon worn into the grass, by the grating and pressure of the broad wheels, and by the treading of the numerous treck-oxen. In other situations, the route is only marked by the Caffre path, which is a narrow track laid down upon the soil by naked human feet, and but just perceptible amid tall herbage. This path is nearly always practicable to horses—that is, to the horses of the land. Now the track runs through the fragrant and red-brown *tambooti* grass, looking for a long distance very much like a furrow in an English cornfield of unusual luxuriance. Now it strikes obliquely down a verdant slope of closer herbage, thickly sprinkled with strange shrubs and flowers, amid which the red blossoms of the indigo are not unfrequent. Now it crosses a running stream, with the gurgling water knee-deep, and with the position of the ford only pointed out by the visible trace of the narrow path descending and ascending the opposite banks. Now it climbs a steep hill, with dark green clumps of the prickly aloe studding the sward; and with bushy trees fringing the upper slopes wherever the swelling surface is grooved by ravines, the evergreen and laurel-foliaged yellow-wood standing boldly out here and there above the smaller growth. Now it skirts a kraal of native huts, looking like a circular cluster of huge and flattened bee-hives, from the low portal of one of which a white-bearded and grisly patriarch of dusky skin, on all-fours, protrudes his head; a broad-shouldered, middle-aged athlete sits on the ground, leaning against another of them, his hands engaged in fashioning the shaft of an assegai; and strange little naked, slim-limbed, and protuberant-bodied children lounge listlessly around. Now the path turns sharply from the kraal, passes amid the waving stalks of a mealie ground, planted in careless and unsymmetrical confusion, and now plunges suddenly into a rugged ravine, water-carved from the solid stone. The craggy staircase is dry, but the eye can perceive at a glance where the rapid torrent leaps down in the wet season from step to step. To the inexperienced neophyte in colonial affairs, the way seems altogether impracticable to equine legs; and the notion of scaling the steep and abrupt track seems very much like that of undertaking to ride up the staircase of the Monument. The horse, however, takes altogether a different view of the matter, and obviously knows very well what he is about. He gathers himself nervously together, and in an instant is among the boulders and fragments, picking his way with most praiseworthy care, and availing himself of every convenient crevice and level space. Arrived at the summit of the steep ascent, the track crosses a gentle slope of grass, and passes through a wild chaos of huge blocks of rolled trap, that lie scattered along the hill-top for some two or three miles. The prospect in the direction of the slant of the hill is now a glorious valley, eight or ten miles across, with a winding stream seen by glimpses in its hollow, and with green hills on the further side capped with dark foliage, and fringed with ravines, tinted of the same deep hue by the trees that completely choke up their furrows. The land is everywhere intersected by these native paths; but how it is that they are kept open, and rendered available as clues through the unknown labyrinth, is one of the mysteries of the region. It is not at all surprising that a heavy wagon, dragged by a dozen oxen, should leave a scar in the sward, which it takes some days to obliterate; but Caffre footpaths remain indelibly engraved from year to year, where, perhaps, not a dozen naked and soft-skinned feet pass in the course of a day. For some ten or twelve inches of breadth, the soil continues perfectly bare of grass. During the dry season of winter, even the larger rivers are generally fordable on horseback at convenient places, to which the frequented paths invariably lead; the water rarely reaching to the stirrup of the rider. All that is necessary for safety, is just to be acquainted with the line of the crossing, which is far from being always the most direct course from bank to bank, and to be somewhat careful of the large stones lying scattered along the river-bed. In the summer, however, the case is very different, the stream being then both deep and strong. Fatal accidents occasionally happen in crossing the swollen rivers at this season. It is not at all an unusual thing for the young colonist to have no other means, for some months in the year, of getting to his apportioned grant of three thousand acres of land, than by swimming such an obstacle. Every time he passes between his property and the bay, or the capital, he has to strip to the skin, and trust himself to the mercy of a turbulent current rushing along at the rate of some seven or eight miles in the hour. Even expert swimmers are very apt to get hampered by the force of these rapid waters. If they attempt to head against the course of the stream, they suddenly find themselves limb-bound, their arms becoming powerless, and seeming to be fastened down to their sides. The only chance of safety, in this disagreeable predicament, is to shun the unequal conflict, and go with the tide. The fastened limbs are immediately set free, as if by a stroke of magic, upon turning down in the current, and the swimmer so becomes able to work his way by slow degrees to the opposite shore. When travellers do not happen to be bold swimmers, they are conveyed across these unfordable rivers by a very ingenious contrivance: a number of reeds are lashed together into a compact buoy-shaped bundle, and this is launched into the water. The passenger places himself astride of the reed-horse, and throws himself prone upon it, embracing it tightly with his arms. An expert native swimmer then pushes the floating buoy across the stream with one hand, while he urges himself onward with the other, and with his legs. The ease with which the most skilful natives drive this laden buoy across rapidly flowing water is very surprising. Native women may often be seen sitting bolt upright upon the reed-float as they are ferried across. The traveller's horse is led after his master by a native attendant, and the saddle and clothes are conveyed over dry by being held aloft on one hand, while the other three limbs are employed in keeping the carrier of the burden afloat; or they are mounted upon a miniature mast stepped into the bundle of floating reeds. The ford, the reed-horse, and swimming, are nearly the only resources of the traveller who has any long progress to make in Natal. There are, of course, no bridges, saving over narrow brooks and rivulets in the near neighbourhood of towns; and upon the inland waters, boats are as rare as bridges. If a man chances to have a crazy boat at his drift, he advertises the fact in the newspapers, as a great argument why wanderers should direct their steps his way.

The high road between the port of Natal and Maritzburg is, upon the whole, a very creditable thoroughfare, and is improving every day. It has been almost entirely made by the military engineers; and the shaking which has to be endured upon it in wagon-travelling, is more the result of the impossibility of guiding a team of fourteen headstrong oxen, than a consequence of its actual roughness. The journey from the coast to the capital *might* be performed upon it very pleasantly with a spring-carriage and horses. There are only two or three places in which rough and steep drifts have to be crossed where any serious difficulty would have to be encountered. This high road, after crossing the Berea, and passing through a few miles of picturesque bush, gets into a country of green swelling hills. For some distance it runs upon the crest of a kind of spur, with valleys on either side; then it traverses two successive steps or terraces, with a very wild and bold district on the right hand, and with a region of gently swelling downs on the left. Very little wood is encountered after the bush has been fairly passed; but the summits of distant hills are frequently seen to be crowned with trees and foliage-filled ravines, and kloofs or hollows constantly diversify the sides of these grassy uplands. From the top of the second terrace, which has an elevation of a little more than two thousand feet above the sea, Maritzburg is seen lying five or six miles away in the midst of a broad flat valley, backed by a green amphitheatre of overhanging heights, which are sentinelled by the black-topped peak of the Zwartkop Mountain on the left, and flanked by the lengthened wall of the Table Mountain to the right. The city itself appears as a long line of white and red dots, set in a thick environment of foliage; the buildings are widely and thinly scattered, and separated from each other by rather extensive stretches of grass, planted with willows and other diminutive-looking trees. The road is seen winding along down the gentle slope which leads into the valley. The first distant view of Maritzburg, standing as it does in a broad open basin, rimmed by green hills, is attractive and bright enough.

It is a curious illustration of the characteristics and conditions of wagon-transport, that the numerous vehicles which are continually on the wheel between the port and the capital, carry half a ton more freight *up* the country, than they will venture to undertake down. It is easier for the sturdy oxen to drag their cumbrous burden bodily up-hill, than it is to let the heavy wagon safely down-hill, unstayed as it is by any other contrivance than a drag upon the wheels. The winter is the season when traffic is most actively carried on within the colony. During the rainy season of the summer, it is very frequently interrupted by the slippery state of the roads. The oxen cannot treck with a heavy wagon after rain, until the surface-soil has acquired a tolerable state of consistency.

There is postal communication between D'Urban and Maritzburg three times in the week; the letter-bags being carried on the backs of natives. The carrier performs his fifty-four miles on foot, with unfailing punctuality, in eighteen hours. The South African is of languid and dreamy temperament, and it is generally supposed that very little labour can be extracted from his sinews. There are few Anglo-Saxons, however, who could carry the heavy letter-bags between D'Urban and Maritzburg as these Zulus do. The newly arrived stranger, as he notes the way in which the various locomotive services required by civilisation are now performed amongst the green slopes of this young land, cannot refrain from wondering how long it will be before the 'Grand Junction Port Natal and Orange River Railway' shall have put the jolting ox-wagon out of joint, and relieved the native postmen of their toil; and how long before the lieutenant-governor places upon his estimates a yearly subsidy for the 'Barotse Valley and Umgeni Line of Electric Telegraph;' in order that government may have the earliest account of the state of the markets at Makololo and on the banks of the Leeba. It would be interesting, too, to know when the *Great Eastern* will be snorting its smoke and flame in the bay. It is perhaps worthy of note that monster vessels of this class may actually do more to make the colony of Natal accessible than any other thing which has been attempted or conceived, notwithstanding the fact that the difficulty has hitherto been the employment of ships of more than a couple of hundred tons' burden. To the *Great Eastern*, the mere turning of one or two hundred miles out of the high road to Australia or India would be an affair of very little moment, and the adverse current of the L'Agulhas stream would be as nothing to her stupendous mechanical power. In the outer bay of D'Urban the question of weather would not give to her captain's face a single cloud of uneasiness. In the teeth of the most formidable south-easter, the monster would turn her bows to the gale, and, under gentle steam, would lie at her ease with perfect *nonchalance*, whilst, in the shelter of the mighty bulwark of her side, her steam long-boat is dropped into the sea, ready packed for Natal. The light and swift steamer would then shoot into the inner bay, regardless of the state of the bar—a matter of life-and-death import to heavier craft—and after depositing its freight in smooth water, would, in a couple of hours at most, be again dangling from the davits by the side of the *Great Eastern*, as she sped swiftly on her way to the east or the south.

AFTER DINNER.

I SHOULD go out to dinner oftener (if I were asked), and, at all events, enjoy it far more, were it not for 'that dread Thereafter'—the conversation which is so certain to take place when the ladies have withdrawn; were it not for that 'something after' dinner, which, whether it turn upon Horses, Dogs, Family, or the Vintages, never fails to sickly o'er with the pale cast of wretchedness that hue of resolution which good port has a tendency to impart to me. The labours of the day being over, their minds being at ease, and their bodies refreshed, one would imagine that men at such a time would grow communicative and unreserved; would express their real opinion upon various interesting subjects; allow what wit and humour they might have to flow unrepressed; and, in short, would make themselves as agreeable and entertaining as possible. And yet most diners-out are aware that the very contrary of this is generally the case.

I do not speak, of course, of assemblies of *savans*—who, however, have their own after-dinner weaknesses—or of persons who have met together with any specific object, or upon any particular occasion; or of mere intellectual society, people to whom dinner is the secondary consideration, and conversation the first—although under both these circumstances I have known this foolish sort of talk to prevail too—but of ordinary after-dinner parties in the upper classes, both in town and country. Thereat, I affirm, a conversation-wheel—such as is in operation at Cremorne Gardens for the convenience of those who practise shooting with a musket and an iron nail—does revolve perpetually with Horses, Dogs, Family, and the Vintages fixed upon it, and nothing else. If we do lose sight for a little while of the horses and dogs, up come family and the vintages to fill their place, and *vice versâ*; and when we have run through the whole very limited gamut, we are only saved by the intervention of the coffee, from the recurrence of the Horses, Dogs, Family, and the Vintages again.

The animals, perhaps, belong more particularly to the country, and the wines to the town—the more obnoxious topic of Family being, alas! common to all places; but they infest conversation, more or less, in either locality, and always to the exclusion of anything really worth hearing. If there happen to be a picture of a horse in the dining-room, it is probable that the equine subject will have the *pas* of the rest. Some hypocrite will be sure to pretend to discover in that work of art a resemblance to the host's 'Old Hannibal'—'everybody who has hunted with the X. Y. Z. must remember Old Hannibal'—and to introduce under that pretext a history of some no less famous brute of his own. If it be a pony, instead of a full-sized animal, so much the worse, for that subject is almost inexhaustible. The pony is the hobby-horse of sporting-men. Nobody ever possessed one that wasn't the very best pony in the world, and quite up to his own weight of fourteen stone or so. It was so tender-mouthed, that a child could ride it; so quiet, that it rather preferred you to shoot from its back than otherwise; and so full of spirit, that—'I will give you my honour, sir'—it would go till it dropped. The sagacity of the buyer or the breeder, we may be sure, is not lost sight of by himself during this recital; and it is generally made to appear in the course of the biography, that the pony was bought for a song and disposed of for five-and-twenty guineas, at the end of as many years' meritorious service. After which, we have the story of 'Old Hannibal,' and of a good-sized stableful of other prodigies besides.

If there be one subject of after-dinner eloquence more pertinaciously handled than that of horses, it is that of dogs, and, unfortunately too, of sporting-dogs. Did the conversation ever diverge to a veritable *Merrylegs*, who could tie knots on his tail, walk on his forelegs, and uncork a bottle of champagne and drink it, the description of his accomplishments might be borne with about the same dissatisfaction as a chapter out of the *Anecdotes of Instinct;* but the subject of all such panegyrics is invariably some mere pointer or retriever, whose very excellence consists in his having been 'broken in,' and possessing no sort of originality whatever. 'Happy are the women about whom are written no biographies,' says the sage; and the same remark is to the full as applicable to sporting-dogs.

Family is a topic which is happily not very often brought upon the tapis, except on occasions when some of the after-dinner party are, or ought to be, under the table. While common sense and propriety hold their own, it is generally seen that such a merely egotistical subject must needs be unpleasing to a general company. If the genealogical speaker—and I had rather drink thirty-shilling sherry and have his room, than the best amontillado and have his company—be himself of ancient lineage, and he talk for personal gratification, his conduct is insolent; if he be not, and he talk to flatter others, it is despicable: the best excuse that a conversationalist of this kind has to offer is, that he is intoxicated. With such an after-dinner companion, how often—Tory as I am—have I groaned in bitterness of spirit: 'O would that not a living man had ever had a grandmother.' How infinitely rather—Elder as I am—would I have had him warble ill-selected songs!

But harassing as these three subjects of post-prandial conversation are, they are not, after all, so pretentious, so humiliating, so barren of every kind of interest, as that of the Vintages. I have often thought that if one of the weaker sex should happen to secrete herself—as her sister did in that assembly of the freemasons—in a cupboard or beneath the table, to listen to the talk when it got into men's hands only, that we should never (if it turned upon the Vintages) hold our supremacy over females any more. She would tell them what we were really made of, and we should very properly be despised for ever afterwards. This is how the tedious topic gets discussed. The host generally begins it with some reference to a bottle then going the round of the table; he affirms that his grandfather obtained it, at great expense and risk, at the beginning of the Peninsular War; and proceeds to detail, how that relative, and his own father, and himself, have been offered vast sums for it by connoisseurs of noble family, but that they had withstood all temptations. Or he narrates how his great-uncle, 'who knew a good glass of wine when he saw it, sir' (always 'sir' upon these occasions, in order, I think, to terrify anybody who may be inclined to question these interesting statements)—how his great-uncle had picked it up at the Plantagenet sale in 1820, when the execution was in the great house at Deerpark, as everybody must recollect, and the duke's wine fetched such extraordinary prices; or he (the host) himself had taken it in a bad debt of the late Alderman Sleekie ('Capital judge of madeira was Sleekie, sir'); and there was the alderman's own seal, if we would like to see it, on every individual bottle now left in the bin. Many of the company are naturally distrustful of these panegyrics, and have more than half a mind to think that this extraordinary wine must have come from the public-house at the corner; but we all hold our glasses between one eye and the candles, and say 'Ha' and 'Indeed' with relish, smack our lips with a peculiar 'turkey-gobbling' noise, and express a wish (without the least foundation in the world) to know where a dozen or two could, by favour, be purchased for ourselves. Some poor relation of the host, or guest whom liquor and courtesy have together overcome, is then very particular to state that such a desire can by no means be gratified; 'There is no such wine as that (in his glass) to be got now-a-days, sir; no, nor at any other table but the present.'

This complimentary statement is the signal for a general conversation upon 'the Vintages,' with which nine-tenths of the company are in reality about as conversant as a Norwegian may be with *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*. A certain dinner-party was lately given in the metropolis, whereto a friend of the present writer's was invited, who shares with him his hatred of 'the Vintages;' it was a man's party at the house of a bachelor, and the oppressive topic of wines was started early, and afforded a dreary run of one hour and forty minutes, without one check. My friend never uttered a syllable, but smiled at the company contemptuously, while he partook of the subject of discussion with a savage determination. The conclusion at last arrived at was the usual one, that there was 'no 34 wine to be got now in this country, sir,' and then they all adjourned to the drawing-room. On their way thither, the host, who had perceived my friend's annoyance, took him aside, and apologised for the dulness of the recent conversation.

'Nay,' replied he, 'I did not mind *that;* it was the falsehood—the absence of truth in what they said which annoyed me. I know the vintage subject perfectly well, having made it my study for years, and I hate to hear the misrepresentations which are afloat about it. For instance, so far from 34 wine being scarce at this moment, there is more of it just now than the merchants (I mention Smith of Crutched Friars, and Jones of the Quadrant, for instance) can well dispose of: there is a *glut* of 34, sir, at this moment in the market, if your friends only knew where to look for it.'

The indignant superiority of the speaker's manner overcame his auditor completely; he went about the drawing-room whispering to his astonished guests this precious news; it was a secret, he said (for he was not going to let my friend have all the credit of it), a dead secret, but he had it from the best authority, he did assure them.

Jones of the Quadrant, Smith of Crutched Friars, were, in consequence, as much surprised as delighted to receive, upon the following day, half-a-dozen separate orders for that 34, of which it was understood by the purchasers 'they had such a plentiful stock in hand.' The worthy merchants did not contradict that statement, we may be sure; and I may state to their honour, if not to that of my friend, that they sent him a few bottles of the genuine precious liquid for having so kindly recommended their cellar to the notice of his acquaintances.

But as there is most certainly an offensive knowingness in some people concerning wine, so there is also, in others, a too great simplicity. Let A. and X. —to avoid any suspicion of personality—represent each one of those different classes. They were old friends, and they dined with each other once a year. The only thing they quarrelled about—and they did it at each of these annual meetings—was the 'vintages,' and the relative value of wines. A. could tell you off upon his fingers what years were good for the grapes from 1800 to the present date; X., who despised such knowledge, and thought all wine pretty much alike, asserted that A. invented his statements; nevertheless, X. always gave his friend the very best bottle of port that money could buy. On the last occasion but one that A. dined with him, the guest finished off one quart, and had just begun another, when the 'vintage' contention became so violent between them, that he left in a huff. On that day year, when the quarrel had of course been long cemented, and the legs of A. were once more under the mahogany of X., the former made a wry face at his first glass of port.

'Why, X.,' cried he, 'what poison is this you are giving me? Though you know no more of port than a Mussulman, you have always set before me hitherto, I must say, most excellent wine; but this—good gracious!—it's perfectly horrible.'

'Did you not like the wine I gave you last year?' inquired X., with a smile of sarcasm.

'Yes,' said A.; 'that was as sound as a bell; and, I remember, that I began the second bottle.'

'Well, this is the same wine,' observed X., gravely.

'I don't believe a word of it,' exclaimed A., exceedingly nettled; 'this couldn't have cost you a pound a dozen.'

'Stop a bit,' replied the other, quietly, and with the air of a man who was about to settle an important question at once and for ever, 'and I will prove to you what a humbug you are; and what rubbish are all your "twenties" and "thirty-fours," and the rest of it. That wine *is* the very same wine that you professed to like so much last year, for it's *the very same decanter* that you left unfinished at my table. And now, will you ever venture to open your mouth about "the vintages" again?'

Nor could X. be got to acknowledge that standing for 365 days in a cellaret would make the slightest difference.

GEOLOGICAL ODOURS.

Geological odours, or odours emitted naturally from rocks or minerals, are interesting on this account—that they are not common. We are speaking, of course, of characteristic odours. Indeed, hardly a rock or stone exists but which, having certain gases condensed in its pores, emits them with their peculiar olfactive properties when breathed upon or when wet. Thus many persons have doubtless, like ourselves, had frequent occasion to remark the peculiar odour which arises suddenly from the earth in the country roads, as well as in the streets of our cities, the moment a heavy summer shower of rain begins to fall.

In organic nature, odoriferous substances are very abundant, and many of them have actually been produced artificially by modern chemists. This is true, for instance, of the sweet essence of bitter almonds, the flavour of the apple (*valerianate of amyle*), of the pear (*acetate of amyle*), of the pine-apple (*butyrate of amyle*), and of the strong-smelling oil of garlic (*sulphide of allyle*). But in the mineral kingdom, only a very few natural species may be distinguished from others by the aid of the olfactory nerve. Certain natural bituminous substances—and here we fall again into the organic world—such as naphtha, petroleum, &c., may be recognised by their peculiar smell; and among the strictly inorganic mineral species diffused through nature, sulphurous acid, hydrosulphuric acid, chlorine, and hydrochloric acid are the most powerfully odorous substances known.

When mineral substances are acted upon chemically, the presence of many bodies may be ascertained with great certainty by the odours they then give rise to; for instance, arseniferous minerals, and compounds of selenium, when heated on charcoal before the blow-pipe, give out an unmistakable smell of garlic and rotten cabbage; and again, certain sulphides, when acted upon by a strong acid, evolve sulphuretted hydrogen.

We have heard many persons speak of the smell of sulphur. Pure sulphur has little or no smell at all; but when burnt in the air, it develops sulphurous acid, the pungent odour of which brings tears into the eyes.

Certain black and dark-coloured limestones, particularly those of the coal and anthraciferous strata, develop, when broken or scratched, a peculiar odour, which has often been attributed to sulphuretted hydrogen, or arseniuretted hydrogen; but, if I mistake not, Dr Percy has satisfactorily proved, that in many black limestones no sulphuretted hydrogen is contained; and it appears more probable that this odour is of organic nature, and due to bituminous substances contained in the limestones we speak of.

Every school-boy is aware that when two pieces of quartz are rubbed smartly together in the dark, they produce a sort of electric light or phosphorescence, which is, to a certain extent, a reproduction of the grand phenomenon of sheet-lightning. A strong odour is emitted at the same time; and this—although I have made no actual experiment to prove it—I believe to be due to *ozone*, a peculiar condition or state of oxygen gas, which, though quite devoid of smell in its natural state, becomes, under the influence of the electric spark, and in various other circumstances, remarkably odoriferous, whilst, at the same time, its chemical properties are completely changed. The electricity produced by rubbing together the two pieces of quartz, acts, it would seem, upon the oxygen of the air which surrounds them, and produces an odour of ozone.

The strong-smelling substances, sulphurous acid, hydrochloric acid, sulphuretted hydrogen, and perhaps chlorine, are present in active volcanoes and Solfatara. Hydrochloric acid is very common, for instance, at Vesuvius, where it is condensed by the aqueous vapour into an acid liquid; it is also found in certain mineral waters, and now and then it is evolved from beds or strata of rock-salt. Chlorine is frequently discovered in the pores of certain ancient volcanic products, such as those of Puy-Sarcouy, in Auvergne. Sulphurous acid is extremely common in volcanic eruptions of all descriptions, and in the gaseous emanations of Solfatara, &c.; whilst sulphuretted hydrogen (hydrosulphuric acid) is most frequently perceived in dormant volcanoes and certain mineral waters.

Pure carbonic acid—which is acknowledged to be the most important of all gaseous emanations, both on account of the abundance with which it is evolved, and the number of localities in which it presents itself—is completely devoid of smell. The same may be said of nitrogen gas and proto-carbide of hydrogen, whilst deuto-carbide of hydrogen has a slight but very peculiar odour.

In mud-volcanoes and salzes, we have a production of sulphurous acid, carbides of hydrogen, naphtha, or other bituminous and odoriferous substances, besides certain gases which are devoid of smell. A fact, which is perhaps little known is this, namely, that naphtha is also present in ordinary volcanic eruptions; and this was actually perceived by the ancient writer Strabo, who relates that the elevated dome-like hill of Methana opened in fiery eruptions, at the close of which *an agreeable odour* was diffused in the night-time. It is very remarkable that the latter was likewise observed during the volcanic eruptions of Santorin in the autumn of 1650, when, according to Ludwig Ross, '*an indescribable pleasant odour*' followed the stinking smell of sulphurous vapours. The same *pleasant odour* has been also noticed by Kotzebue during an eruption of the newly formed volcano Umnack, in the year 1804; and during the great eruption of Vesuvius on the 12th of August 1805, Humboldt and Gay-Lussac perceived a *bituminous odour* prevailing at times in the ignited crater.

There is not much doubt left now that it is naphtha that burns in several of those remarkable productions of nature, the perpetual burning-springs, more especially in the famous Asiatic Chimæra, in Lycia, on the coast of Asia Minor. In many springs of this kind, it has been supposed that it is carburetted hydrogen gas (carbide of hydrogen) that burns. 'We see issue from the ground,' says Humboldt, speaking of gaseous emanations in general, 'steam and gaseous carbonic acid—almost free from the admixture of nitrogen—carburetted hydrogen gas, which has been used in the Chinese province of Sse-tschaun for several thousand years, and recently in the village of Fredonia, in the state of New York (U. S.), in cooking and for illumination.' But it is difficult to account for so continual a supply of gas always emanating from nearly the same spot: indeed, this objection might be raised respecting naphtha; but it loses, perhaps, a little of its force in the latter case.

At the time Captain Beaufort visited the famous Chimæra (his observations were published in 1820), it was thought to be a spring of burning carburetted hydrogen gas. Since that time, the same spot has been visited by many travellers, curious to see a perpetual fire that has been burning now for several thousand years, and which has been spoken of by Pliny, Seneca, Ctesias, Strabo, among the ancients, and by a host of modern writers. Lieutenant Spratt and Professor Edward Forbes found this spring as brilliant as ever, just as Beaufort had left it, perhaps even somewhat increased. They speak of *soot* being deposited by its flames, and this seems to prove that it is naphtha that burns, and not carburetted hydrogen, for the latter would deposit no soot. This soot is produced in considerable quantity, and the Turks use it as a remedy for sore eyelids, and value it as a dye for the eyebrows. But what gives still more probability to the assertion that it is naphtha that burns in this perpetual fiery spring, is the *agreeable odour* remarked near it by a more recent traveller, Albert Berg, a distinguished German artist.

The Chimæra rises from serpentine rocks associated with limestone, somewhat similar to the formation observed by Sir Roderick Murchison and Pareto in the districts of Tuscany, where the boracic acid *fumarolle* exists; and, curious to relate, it appears probable from certain ancient traditions, that some of these boracic acid springs were formerly seen to be luminous (ignited) during the night.

At the bottom of a crater-like cavity, from which the combustible vapours issue in the Chimæra, is a shallow pool of sulphurous and turbid water, which is regarded by the natives of these parts as a sovereign remedy for all kinds of skin-disease.

Albert Berg has described the famous Asiatic Chimæra pretty nearly as follows: It is situated near the town of Deliktasch, in Lycia, on the west coast of the Gulf of Adalia. Near the ruins of an ancient temple of Vulcan rise the remains of a Christian church in the later Byzantine style. In a forecourt situated to the east, the flame breaks out of a fireplace-like opening about two feet broad, and one foot deep, in the serpentine rock. It rises to a height of three or four feet, '*and diffuses a pleasant odour*,' which is perceptible to a distance of forty paces. At a distance of three paces from the flame, the heat it gives out is scarcely endurable; a piece of dry wood ignites when it is held in the opening and brought near the flame without touching it. And this magnificent phenomenon has been going on for several thousand years!

Of all geological odours, that which I am about to speak of is, at least in one respect, the most curious. Its discovery was made in the following manner:

During the five or six years I was occupied in scientific pursuits at the university of Brussels, I employed various means to make the acquaintance of, and to be on good terms with, the workmen employed in clearing away the sandy strata which surrounds the town; and especially with those who were then occupied in levelling a great part of the *Faubourg de Schaerbeek*. Brussels, like Rome, is built upon seven hills, so that the works of which I speak often attained a considerable depth in the strata of the earth, affording many an opportunity of noting the exact disposition of these strata and the fossils they contain.

By sundry promises—which, I beg to add, were most faithfully fulfilled—of *faro** and cigars, I prevailed upon several workmen to bring to me everything 'curious-looking' that they happened to meet with in their work of excavation, or to send for me immediately if the treasures they dug up were too large or too heavy to be transported to my abode.

In this manner I got hold of a good deal of rubbish, such as curiously shaped stones, clotted sand, differently coloured flints, &c., &c.; but I soon found myself also in possession of some very rare and curious specimens, which even the professors of the university looked upon with wonder, and which have more than once excited the curiosity and admiration of the illustrious and much-regretted Dumont, who sometimes honoured me with a visit.

Brussels, I should also inform my readers, stands upon the lower or more ancient of the Tertiary strata. D'Omalius d'Hallog, another celebrated Belgian geologist, classes its strata in the *middle eocene* formation. The town and its environs are built upon an immense bed of sand, often calcareous, and presenting frequently blocks of calcareous sandstone, which gradually blend into a sort of shining quartzite, known as *grès luisant* by the Belgian and French geologists, and blocks or strata of white or yellowish limestone.

These are all employed, to a certain extent, for building and paving; but the stones they furnish are not large enough to be very valuable. The deposit (formation or strata, call it what you will) of which we have just spoken, is tolerably rich in fossils, most of which are also found in the lower strata of the Paris Tertiaries, which are considered to be of the same geological age. Among other fossils brought to me from the middle eocene sand of Schaerbeek, were some magnificent specimens of a sort of cocoa-nut or palm-nut. Once upon a time, these 'cocoa-nuts' (*Nipadites*) grew and flourished at Brussels: now-a-days, it is as much as we can do to keep the hardy date-palm alive in this climate.

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* Belgian beer.

In the same strata with the palm-nuts—which are always completely petrified—are found petrified stems of palm-trees, bamboos, and trees resembling poplar-trees. These palm-nuts, bamboos, and poplar-like trees are sometimes found pierced in all directions by a species of *teredo*, which has left its worm-shaped shells in the petrified wood. Sometimes large clusters of the calcareous tubes of this mollusk are found covering, or buried in, the stem of a poplar or palm-tree; sometimes, again, they shew themselves in compact masses, where only a slight vestige of a tree-stem remains discernible; in this case, the wood has been so thoroughly tunnelled, that hardly any of it remains.

The fossil (*teredo*) of which I speak belongs to that tribe of worm-shaped mollusca so much dreaded by shipowners before the copper sheathing of vessels was imagined. The animals of this genus lay their eggs—for certain tribes are still in existence—upon the surface of submerged wood; the young teredo, as soon as it is excluded, begins to work its way inward, and continues to proceed to a greater depth as it grows larger. Its mode of operating, both curious and wonderful, is described in works on zoology; its tunnelling apparatus exceeds everything that man's genius has yet brought to bear in making *his* tunnels. The particular species to which I allude as being found in the fossil-trees of the Schaerbeek sand, is the *Teredo corniformis* of Lamarck. In the province of Brabant, we have two or three other fossil species of the same genus.

The existing teredo makes the same havoc amongst the cocoa-nuts and palm-stems which float at the present time in the tropical seas, that its predecessors made thousands of centuries ago, when flourishing amidst the waters that deposited the middle eocene beds of Brussels.

Our readers have no doubt heard of the marvellous property possessed by musk of retaining its odour for a long period of time. Months—nay, years may elapse, and the musk is as odoriferous as ever. But can any odour be retained for a hundred thousand years or more? My fossil teredos answer this question in the affirmative!

When these fossils are fresh from the strata in which they lie, or when they are scratched with a knife, they emit a strong smell of the sea; so strong, indeed, in some specimens, that I could hardly believe—my nose.

The odour of the sea is, however, very characteristic, and not easily mistaken or forgotten. Let any one plunge his olfactory organ into a bunch of clean, fresh, damp sea-weed, and he will soon acknowledge the veracity of this assertion—it has been remarked in very early historical periods. If I remember rightly, Quintus Curtius Rufus, in one of the ten books which he wrote to convey to posterity the *History of the Reign of Alexander the Great*, says that the pilots of his august majesty recognised the sea by its odour—'agnoscere se auram maris'—that is to say, they were made aware that they were approaching the ocean by the peculiar smell that was wafted through the atmosphere.

However, to assure myself that the *odour of the Tertiary sea* was not an illusion, I immediately had the fact certified by a considerable number of persons, among whom I could name some very eminent and popular men. All, without exception, were delighted at the idea of their olfactory organs thus launching them into the bygone ages of ante-historic or geological periods, and marvelled at the prodigious number of years the fossils I have described had retained their smell. I then made known this discovery to the Académie des Sciences de Paris.

I have said that the fossils here alluded to were taken from the middle eocene of Brussels, with which our readers are a little acquainted; they, the fossils, have therefore retained their odour *for thousands of centuries!*

CLOUDLAND.

The everlasting gates of God's bright heaven
Upon their golden hinges grandly turn,
And the bright pathway to their bars seems riven
By flashing hoofs of fiery steeds, that spurn
The glittering vapour that doth glow and burn
With dazzling radiance—and the godlike Sun
Spurs down in splendour to his glorious bourne
Like young returning conqueror whose victories are won.

Bright streams of gushing glory flood the earth,
And fill the heavens with gorgeous pageantries;
And lovely Evening, as she issues forth
From the mysterious portal of the skies,
Hath all her garments tinged with heavenly dyes
Of lingering brightness—and fair varied hues
Suffuse all softly her gray mournful eyes,
Wet with the liquid loveliness of heaven's unshedden dews.

The golden bars let down from heaven's gate
Soon leave the earth, but linger roseately
The silver clouds of eve t' irradiate,
And form ethereal landscapes in the sky;
The which may serve to faintly typify
God's bright elysium, and the spirit-gaze
Direct to scenes that all beyond them lie,
Whose far-off glory dimly shines through their celestial haze.

Soft floating wreaths of scattered azure mist
Condense to fair blue lakes of sleeping light,
Fringed round with hills whose peaky tops are kist
By warm soft gleams of rainbow colours bright—
Then, slow dissolving, change to scenes all dight
With rustic pictures, 'mid fair pleasant plains
Where threading waters flash beyond the sight,
All bordered with far-winding paths, where quiet beauty reigns.

And then the fading clouds, all driftingly,
Submerge together in similitude,
Of Nature's own wild thrilling scenery—
With hurtling rocks up-piled in grandeur rude,
Where evermore broods hoary Solitude—
With darkened ravine, and wild mountain cave
And rifting gorge—all solemnly imbued
With shades of purple evening light mysterious and grave.

As fades the light from the celestial doors,
Weird gloomier scenes form in the dark'ning sky—
Wide trackless moors clad in dark stunted gorse;
Or hostile armies, camped mysteriously
On dimly tented fields, stand frontingly,
And melt at last into each other's ranks;
Or shrouded forms, in bands of mystery,
Like hooded mourners, flit along in shadowy phalanx.

Now Twilight dons her veil of silver gray,
Which wanly dims the last faint streak afar,
Till through its mystic folds, with pearly ray,
Beams the fair lustre of each placid star—
And the calm Moon, from o'er her wooded bar
Rises, in loveliness serenely bright,
Through her wide realms up-rolls her shining car,
And rides in virgin majesty queen-regent of the Night!

E. H. C. D.

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THE BURNS CENTENARY.

POOR BURNS!—to die so early—seven-and-thirty—and in such comparative obscurity, if not humility of circumstances—and sixty-three years after, to be the subject of such a world's festival! For so, in a manner, this centenary celebration of his birth has been. In his own day, admired no doubt greatly, yet chiefly as a wonderful ploughman, how rich has been his posthumous fame above that of all contemporary or succeeding bards! Ever since his death, his birthday has been celebrated by sympathising admirers in every city and nearly every town of his native land—a meed of grateful worship paid to no other British bard of any age. And now, when it came to be a hundred years from his birth, what a burst of universal rejoicing in the fact of his having been called into existence! Shakspeare has had one or two festivals at Stratford; Petrarch was laurel-crowned by his countrymen; there is such a thing as the Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey; and here and there, throughout the world, one finds a poet's bust or statue. But what other poet, what other literary man of any description, ever had such honours paid to his name as Robert Burns has just had paid *to his?* It is, as our readers well know, wholly unexampled.

No external force, nothing adventitious, has entered into this wonderful celebration. It was wholly a spontaneous movement, with no general tie of connection whatever, but that resting in the universal admiration entertained for Burns. Each group of people worked in its own locality for a worthy celebration, as if the whole matter lay there, and each had its own sense of gratified surprise in finding that every other locality where Burns was understood, had felt and was acting, or had acted, like itself. Edinburgh was delighted to hear of the enthusiasm of Glasgow; Glasgow rejoiced to hear of what the Edinburgh people were doing. 'Auld Ayr' felt proud that *her* bard was 'respectit' in other places so well. The cities wondered afterwards to hear what the villages had said and done; and the villages were pleased to hear of the demonstrations in the cities. Scotland was enchanted to think that Liverpool, Manchester, London, expressed themselves so vividly on the occasion. All Britain afterwards heard with astonishment of the outburst that broke from the American heart. Australia remains to be reported; but we can already make sure that there the manifestations have not been a whit colder. Everywhere one feeling, a generous and venerative one, recognising that religion of the social feelings of which Burns has been so eminently the hierophant, acknowledging the virtue there is in a happy poetical expression of the nobler sentiments of human nature, and penitently admitting, too, that all was the more right and proper since the bard in his life had had such stinted reward. It is surely no light or common thing that such a large portion of mankind should have been brought together to such a sacrament of the unworldly affections—feeling for once not as rivals, or gain-seekers, or even praise-seekers, but wholly as devotees to one illustrious Memory, which was but another name for moral doctrines of lofty interest and universal application.

The affair was, indeed, not without deductions and exceptions. It would have been exceptive beyond nature had it been otherwise. There were a few minds, well enough meaning, but simply short of vision, or perverted by peculiar corporation feelings, who held back with words of disparagement for the personal character of the poet. It is to be lamented, and, if possible, forgiven. A strange doctrine it surely is to advance, that an eminent man is to be judged solely by his faults. As well tell us, we are to judge of the sun by his spots. Burns was a man of most generous character. There is not from end to end of his career the taint of a single shabby, mean, or self-seeking action. In his poor labouring-days at Mossgiel, he reared and educated an orphan boy—the Hughoc of his 'Poor Mailie.' He worked for father, mother, and sisters most heroically. A half of the free profits from his poems he gave to a brother, as a kind of provision for his widowed mother. He was invariably kind and tender to young persons, and to the poor and aged, even to 'the ourie cattle and the silly sheep.' In his latter days of greatest struggle, he was a lender, rather than a borrower; it even appears, rather surprisingly, that he was once or twice an *accommodator* to more struggling persons. With seventy pounds a year, he refused to make money by those productions of his muse which he contributed to the work of another. Most rare it is for a man to pass through life so unspotted in respect of money as the poor bard of Scotland. And yet he had no small share of even the prudential virtues. He was careful of expense in personal and household matters, and, small as his income was, died all but free of debt. He bestowed care on the education of his children. He enjoyed the respect of many worthy friends. Robert Ainslie, who knew him well, always spoke of him as the *finest fellow* possible. As to his failings, the wildest injustice has been done. He enjoyed festive scenes, as might have been expected of a man of such impressionable and generous nature; but he was not remarkable in this way more than a large portion of respectable society in his own day. He had transgressions of another kind—'thoughtless follies' which 'laid him low, and stained his name'—and he had grace to repent of them. On both points, a gross injustice has been done to Burns, in consequence of his own want of the 'art of hiding,' and of the exposure to which poverty condemned him. Men of high position die every day, with faults as great, or greater than his, known fully in their own circle, but never spoken of in their obituaries, and which consequently never come before the notice of the world. Their rank, and the regard to decorum which now reigns in literature, screen them. Burns, because he was outspoken, because he was poor and of no regard, and left no friends of sufficient consequence to be offended by the free discussion of his failings, has been treated in this particular as if he were some extraordinary delinquent. Treat the elegant respectabilities of society even in our purer days in the same manner, and how many of them would come out any better than Burns? Few indeed. We would claim, then, of such as think Burns unfit for their sanction, that they either anatomise as keenly the failings of other notable men of intellect, or that they let the poor bard alone. But, after all, we need not argue with such people. The general acclaim of love and admiration from the national heart tells what Burns really was.

There is something remarkable about this expression of the national feeling in regard to Burns, for in some important respects our poet appears not to coincide with the general character or ideas of his countrymen. With strong religious feelings, and that sense of what was beautiful in their religious practice, which he has expressed so well in his *Cotter's Saturday Night*, he is generally regarded as having dissented from them in something of their creed, and not a little of their external observances. The traditions of Calvinistic Presbyterianism, which so much moulded the late Hugh Miller, had no share in the making of Burns. Like his predecessor Ramsay, and his successor Scott, he had greater affinity to cavalier principles, and really did at one time avow Jacobite sentiments. He disrelished all ultra-grave penitential appearances; love, friendship, gaiety, drollery, social enjoyments of all kinds, were what his nature clung to, and they make a large appearance in his verse. Thus he appears as so far exceptive to his countrymen; and it may be a matter of some surprise, accordingly, that they have always so greatly delighted in his writings, and come forward on the late occasion as such devout worshippers of his genius. But here we must say that, with a right understanding of Scotland, and a right understanding of Burns, there is no mystery whatever. True, the general external expression of the national Scottish character—that which first meets the view of strangers—is what strangers apprehend it to be. But then there is a large and most respectable minority of Scottish people who are not of that temper and profession. They embody the portion of the national mind which has expressed itself in civil wars for the hapless Mary, in taking arms for her imprudent descendants; which has announced itself in our romantic ballads and comical songs; which inspired Ramsay, Smollett, Fergusson, Scott, Galt, Wilson, and Aytoun. It is a thing standing much apart from the serious Presbyterianism of the north; and yet, along with the latter, in many minds, there is a large admixture of the other class of feelings too, rendering the general social life of Scotland at bottom, or in reality, of a far softer, more genial, and even more romantic and enthusiastic texture than it appears to be. Now, it was this part of Scottish society, or rather this part of the Scottish national character, which sprung out into such vivid demonstrations at the Burns Centenary. The convictions of the people on matters of the highest concernment were not the less profound that they joined to honour a great national poet who dissented from them in some things. It was only that they put these aside for the hour, in order to pour forth their feelings on certain great concerns of humanity in which they and Burns fully sympathised.

MY ONLY TREASON.

My father was the manager of seven country theatres in the midland counties. To the little town of Chesterfield our company used to pay an annual visit of six weeks. It was then (in the year 1810) a dépôt for 500 French prisoners, the majority of whom were gentlemen of such refined manners and good behaviour, that the authorities put but little restraint on them, and the townsmen treated them with marked civility. My father took a great fancy to their society, and, being profusely hospitable, our house was open to all comers. I possessed the privilege of introducing four friends to the theatre nightly, and was in consequence extremely popular with the more juvenile portion of the prisoners. My chief friend and associate was Laurent Duchanne, our drawing-master, a youth for whom my brother and I had formed a friendship of that romantic character often entertained in boyhood. Duchanne was elegant, lively, refined, but constitutionally infirm. The idea of his having been a sailor was ludicrous; it was like planting an exotic on an iceberg. He had the most perfect conviction of the superiority of his country and her destiny; and it was doubtless to establish the supremacy of the French navy, and rival the memory of Nelson, that he had sought the ungenial spirit of the sea. It was in the second year of our acquaintance that he told me his history, his abhorrence of the navy, after a few months' bitter experience, and his extreme dread of perpetual banishment from his home and his mother. At last he expressed his firm and unalterable determination to try and escape, and, if possible, reach America, and so France. In vain I pointed out to him the certainty of detection, and the horrors of incarceration at Norman Cross. Duchanne had great powers of persuasion; he appealed to my generosity. I could not resist; and our interview ended by my giving him a solemn assurance that I would assist him in his flight.

My reflections, when alone, were anything but pleasant. I knew that Duchanne's accent and redundant action would prove him to be a Frenchman everywhere. Perplexed and uncertain what course to adopt, I resolved to sound my brother on the subject, who, to my surprise, flatly refused all assistance—urged the impracticability of the idea, the certain resentment of our father, and the certainty of failure, unless Duchanne could be concealed for a whole month at least, until the hue and cry was over. I felt bitterly the truth of all he said; but, irritated by his refusal, the petulance of my disappointment turned into violent rage, which I vented upon my brother, telling him, with an energy that would have done honour to our first tragedian, that if he had no heart, I had a most enlarged and capacious one; that I would assist Duchanne all the more in consequence of his refusal, with heart, hand, and purse—suiting the action to the word; a most heroic decision for a youth aged only fourteen, and possessed of but nine and sixpence. The following morning, we boys were told that we were no longer to travel with the company, but to be left at our house at Derby, to go to school another year. This news revived my hopes. I thought I could persuade our housekeeper to receive Duchanne as a guest. My brother instantly negatived this proposal also, pointing out the perfect certainty of his visit becoming known to our father and the neighbours; when another idea struck me, a safe and secure plan, in which we need seek for no assistance, but depend entirely upon ourselves.

'Harry, my boy,' said I, 'we'll hide him in the Derby theatre. It is but twenty-four miles from Chesterfield. The keys are always left at our house, that the theatre may be let during the company's absence, and they won't open till Easter Monday. We've six months before us. The nights will then be dark at six o'clock. If we could keep him concealed three weeks, he might reach Liverpool, get a ship, work his passage to America; and come what may, if he were taken, he has too much honour to split upon us. What say you?'

Henry's scruples seemed to be staggered by this new proposal. We both agreed that it would be jolly good fun—a lark that would last three months, planning, executing, and completing; and when we went to bed, we laughed half the night away, as our imaginations suggested each coming event and ludicrous incident. The next morning, we held a council of war, to arrange our plans. It was settled that the week after Guy Fawkes's day—the commemoration of which would absorb a portion of our attention —we were to write to our landlord's daughter, under the pretext of having lost a brooch, and enclose a letter to Duchanne, informing him what preparations we had made, suggesting the day he should start, what measures he had best adopt, where he could find us, and how he could tell us of his safe arrival. Duchanne was in ecstasy at every proposal. He expressed his thanks in choked, ardent, and impassioned eloquence. He was again in France—his escape and our heroism were the theme and wonder of his friends and his mother! Oh, his mother and his sister! Oh, his little sister! He infused his enthusiasm into us. The spirit of enjoyment is catching. I bought six pennyworth of tarts and three bottles of pop. In the afternoon, we went to the theatre, and practised a combat of three, in which, by dexterous manœuvring, fighting on the floor, and disinterestedly rushing in and rescuing each other under every perilous extremity, we made ourselves invincible—more than a match for a host of common-place catchpoles and constables; we almost longed for a row to distinguish ourselves. In the evening, we reassembled, and I read aloud the *Life and Adventures of Baron Trenck*—a work which I conjectured would give us some practical hints respecting escapes, dangers, and difficulties. The day we separated, all was gloom and despondency. We two reached Derby on a Thursday; and as we did not go to school in the middle of the week, we devoted Friday and Saturday to taking a survey of the theatre and putting it to rights for its projected visitor. We fixed his place of residence in the ladies' dressing-room, in which there was a small partition, with a door leading to the stage-staircase, by which he could escape unobserved, even if the first dressing-room was opened. We piled set pieces from the top of the staircase all round the back of the stage, leaving an open passage up to a second flight of stairs leading to the carpenter's shop, at the termination of which was a trap-door passing over the false roof across the pit, that enabled us to reach the exterior of the building—that is, the leads on the roof. The thunder-box, placed aloft, extended all round the stage; it was the old orthodox style of thunder-box, not the mere sheet of iron of modern invention. The head of it, in which the balls were placed, was very large, and where the thunderer stood, was capacious enough to hold a human body. This we emptied; and the putting a piece of old carpet at the bottom, and the bloody pillow by which Don Raymond is warned of the approach of his intended murderer in the romantic melodrama of *Raymond and Agnes*, were considered the finishing-strokes to our arrangements. How we roared with laughter over our work! The passage formed by the set piece we called the 'secret pass;' the carpenter's ladder was the 'drawbridge,' which, if you pulled up when you had mounted, you might laugh to scorn a host of baffled invaders. The carpenter's shop was our 'castle keep or stronghold;' the thunder-box, our 'subterranean passage to the mountains,' intended only for a temporary retreat, in case anybody might inspect the premises with a view to their occupation. The theatre was terribly damp, and we dare not make a fire for fear of the smoke. We introduced a sack of charcoal at dusk, but could not leave any provisions, for fear of the rats. On the 7th of November, we wrote our promised letter. We suggested to Duchanne that he should set out on the following Sunday evening, when there would be but little traffic on the road. We sent him a map of the entrance into Derby; told him to wait till the watchman went off his beat, and throw a few pebbles at the second-floor window of our house, the situation of which we minutely described. This letter took much preparation, and was written in very unintelligible French, so that, if it were lost, no one but the party for whom it was intended could understand it. Duchanne's answer, if our suggestions were comprehended and approved of, was to contain only the drawing of a sailor-boy with a bundle over his back, which we received by return of post; and with anxious hearts, and some apprehensions we had never felt before, we went to bed the evening before his expected arrival. How tediously the hours passed on that still well-remembered night; it rained in torrents, and the wind howled frightfully. From three to four o'clock my brother and I never exchanged a word. When All-Saint's chimes struck five, Harry proposed we should take a glass of gin—a portion of our commissariat—a fraternal proffer which I cheerfully accepted. We heard the watchman's last call, and a few minutes after, fancied we heard the signal at our window. Alas! it was but the noisy pattering of the heavy rain. We were both dressed, all but our boots, sitting at the foot of the bed, enveloped in blankets, and 'all ears.' The chimes went a quarter to six. I felt confident Duchanne had failed, and was perhaps taken. I turned to confess my fears to my companion, when smack, with a most unmistakable rattle, came the appointed signal! We both bounded on our feet, as if influenced by one motion. We crept down stairs, opened the yard-door softly, and into our arms, dripping wet, and sobbing with long-suppressed fear and exhaustion, rushed poor Duchanne! We had put a raking coal upon the kitchen fire, and hid the coffee-pot in the oven. All was hot. We urged him to eat and drink, shook him by the hand a dozen times, and evinced our joy in extravagant pantomime! No time was to be lost; the towns-people would soon be stirring; so, giving Duchanne a few minutes by the glowing fire, we set out for the theatre, with a wash-hand basin, a quartern loaf, a bottle of gin, a pound of uncooked sausages, a gridiron, a glue-pot to make coffee, two old fighting-swords, and a French prisoner. We reached the dressing-room, which we had rendered comparatively comfortable, and for the first time seemed to draw our breath freely. There never yet was known, in the memory of man, in a provincial theatre, a pistol that would go off, or a fire that would burn up at the precise moment it was required. We could not light our fuel; so we persuaded our hero to go to bed. We wrapped him up in two blankets, a horse-cloth, and an old Shylock's gabardine, placed the bottle of gin by his side, and listened to a hasty narrative of his adventures. He had left Chesterfield at dark, avoiding all the turnpikes, had changed his clothes in a hovel, and taken shelter from the storm more than an hour; then, finding all chance of its abatement hopeless, had braved it manfully. He had reached Derby unnoticed and uninterrogated at five o'clock, found St Mary's gate easily, and had given the signal when not a single person was to be seen. We left him, requesting him, when he was refreshed, to look over the theatre, and make himself master of every nook and corner, promising to be with him again at six in the evening. The poor fellow looked frightfully ill, and when he closed his eyes, resembled a corpse more than a living creature; but he was hopeful, and even merry, and smiled amidst his tears as he shook the rain from his long flowing hair, and spoke of his beloved France, and his dear mother and little sister.

In the evening, we revisited him; the wind had gone down, and he had managed to light the charcoal fire. He had been undisturbed, except by the rats. He complained of the solitude, and of the darkness, for which there was no relief; there being but one small, dingy, dirty, broken window in all the lower portion of the building, and that only served to shew obscurely the skeleton-like outline of the traps, on the wood-work of which were hung ancient pieces of armour, masks comic and horrible, nautico-mythological monsters, property skulls, half-obliterated transparencies with inscriptions, such as—'Protect the child of the murdered Agnes;' 'By thee I fell, thy fates decreed; Heaven will avenge the bloody deed;' 'Powder Magazine, &c.;' the refuse of the accumulation of years, the influence of which things upon the mind was most dispiriting and oppressive. All things went on smoothly until Friday morning, when the *Derby Mercury* announced the flight of a French prisoner, with a description of his height, dress, and personal appearance, and offered a reward for his apprehension! This was serious; but our consternation was awful when, on asking what consequences attached to the concealment of a prisoner, we were told that it was an act of treason, and all the parties implicated would be hanged! We scarcely knew what treason meant, and little imagined that any act of ours, innocent of an intention of error, would subject us to any penalty beyond that which one school-boy would incur for assisting another to play truant. 'We mustn't tell this to Duchanne,' said my brother, 'but be more cautious and prudent than ever.' We went to see our captive at the usual hour, and found him in the greatest terror. He placed his finger on his lips, and whispering to us not to speak aloud, gave us the following appalling news. I shall not attempt his accent, or his curious construction of sentences. The theatre had been entered in our absence. About four in the afternoon he heard footsteps in the direction of the gentlemen's dressing-room. They seemed to advance towards his place of concealment; his door, which was locked, was tried. The footsteps then became more distant, and at last ceased altogether. Duchanne stole to the 'secret pass;' while there, to his astonishment and horror, he saw the figure of a man drop through the ventilator into the gallery—a figure so tall that, as it stood upon the seats, its extended arms nearly reached the opening, a distance of nearly nine feet. Through the opening was lowered, by some invisible agency, a number of large packages, which the figure deposited under the gallery seats. This occupation continued some time. A rope was then lowered, and Duchanne distinctly saw the figure ascend. Its arms were bare, and they, as well as the rest of its person, were blue—a pale, unnatural, unearthly blue! Terror struck us dumb.

It is perhaps necessary to remind the reader that, at the time of which I write, a belief in ghosts was universal. The philosophical views entertained by the sceptical moderns, and their summary method of dealing with the belief in disembodied spirits, were undiffused, and would have subjected their promulgator to the charge of atheism. Every one, then, indulged in the luxury of his own ghost, and had a respectful deference for that of his friend or neighbour. My brother's opinion, to which I conceded, was, that the colouring of blue proved the supernatural character of the visitor, without a doubt. Duchanne had no such apprehension; his fears all merged in the dread of detection, and he determined for the future to sleep in the thunder-box, or 'stronghold in the mountains.' The next day, Saturday, was a holiday, and we resolved to search the building from roof to cellar, with which assurance we left our poor friend, our pulsation at high pressure, having to explore our way through the passage to the door in darkness—a feat we completed with our eyes closed, and our teeth clenched in desperate determination.

'Bill,' said my brother, when we were in our bedroom, 'did you never hear that the Derby theatre was built upon an old burying-ground, and that a lot of skulls were turned up when they sunk the traps?'

I replied 'that I always understood it was an old Catholic chapel, which was much the same thing, if not worse'—our Catholic countrymen being then considered agents of the devil, and held in frightful disrepute.

Harry resumed: 'Tom Baker, our old stage-keeper, and Joey Earl [a gentleman who had officiated forty years as hair-dresser and box-keeper] told me that it was haunted worse than the Castle of Otranto; and that old wretch, Daddy O'Brian, always said that if he could come back again, he would certainly revisit his old shop; and he has too: both Baker and Earl have seen him twenty times, trimming his wigs and cleaning his sword-handles and paste-buckles in his old dressing-place; but being perfectly harmless and quiet, they never noticed him.'

Mr O'Brian had been an actor of some celebrity; he had been for years a pensioner upon the concern; had died in Derby, and his name was always a terror from a belief that his ghost haunted the theatre—a report that was kept alive by the stage-keeper, to keep away the host of intruding boys who were the pest of the place.

After some consultation, we agreed that Duchanne had seen old O'Brian's ghost—which had established itself the spiritual custodian of the premises—concealing his properties; and finding the place occupied by some person—probably an actor whose organ of accumulativeness might induce him to lay hands upon all stage-properties left about without any obvious owner—had collected his whole wardrobe (he always found his own), and secreted it.

In the morning when we rose, Harry said to me: 'Bill, did you not say the theatre was once an old Catholic chapel?'

I assented.

'Umph!' continued he; 'old O'Brian was a Catholic and an Irishman; that may have something to do with his sticking to the premises. I'm glad I learned Latin, though I always hated it. I've been told that if you say the Lord's Prayer in Latin in any bewitched place, nothing evil can touch you. Let us throw no chance away; so, as we go into the gallery to search it, let us say the prayer together—but, mind, in Latin, or the ghost will pretend he doesn't understand us!' Here he became pathetic. 'It's hard times, Bill,' he whimpered, 'for two lads like us to be in dread of detection, and in fear of a disgraceful death in this world for only doing an act of kindness, but we must also have to fight it out with beings of another world. I should not care if they were living creatures, breathing and all that, like ourselves. But I always hated ghosts; and I hate old O'Brian's ghost worse than poison;' and he struck out his clenched fist, and spoke with great asperity.

I saw he had worked himself up to desperation point, and was ready to encounter anything.

When we got to the theatre, Duchanne was not in his room, nor could we find him. Our last night's terrors redoubled. Had he been taken by his worldly persecutors, or spirited away by devils? At last, we discovered him asleep in the thunder-box—a precaution he thought necessary after the last alarm. Nothing had happened during the night. After he had breakfasted, we lighted our lantern, and unfastened the broken shutter of the one window that admitted light into the lower part of the building, and began our search. We found every door fast. Then how could any one—that is, any mere human being—enter? Our apprehensions of old O'Brian's agency were confirmed. For my part, I thought his visit a friendly warning to shew us that we were engaged in a transaction replete with danger and opposed to the laws of our country. We wended our way to the false roof, hand in hand. I was lowered first through the ventilator; I kept my eyes shut till my feet touched the gallery seats. Harry followed me; Duchanne remained aloft to pull us up again. As Harry descended, his left arm twisted round the rope, in his right, holding aloft his fighting-sword, he began, when half-way down: 'Pater noster qui es (pray, Bill, pray), Pater noster qui es in cœlo,' &c. When he came upon his feet, he opened his eyes, brandished his sword, jumped over three of the seats right into the centre of the gallery, and kicked and cut about him in every direction. Almost immediately his sword fell upon a soft substance, upon which he made a frightful onslaught. I was instantly by his side with the light. It was a packing-case. Before me lay another, and another; five in all. I cut through the canvas covering with my penknife. They contained wearing-apparel—ready-made coats and waistcoats; and on turning the cases over, I found the name of 'Mackenzie' marked upon them. A light broke in upon me; I seized Harry by the arm, dragged him under the ventilator, and called out: 'Duchanne, pull us up again. I think I can explain it all.'

We were soon up, across the false roof, over the moat, as we called it, and down the drawbridge with a slide, without touching a spoke in the ladder. We reached the dressing-room, where my companions stood before me, looking in my face with bewildered stupified astonishment. After wiping away the perspiration that ran down my nose, I explained that the adjoining premises—on the side by which, no doubt, the house had been entered—belonged to Mr Topham, the dyer, whose wife's sister married Mr Mackenzie, the wholesale clothes-merchant in the market-place, who once hired, and used to deposit his goods in the theatre, until some misunderstanding with our housekeeper dissolved the contract. No doubt the ghost was Jack Topham, the dyer's eldest son, a tall, athletic young man, and his coadjutor was his brother Tom. His blue appearance, turned-up sleeves, and half-naked legs, could be easily accounted for by his having been engaged in dyeing blue! His appearance in the daytime always bore marks of his occupation; his possession of a key could be explained by his past tenantship; the selection of the gallery as a place for the concealment of the goods, a precaution necessary to avoid their discovery and abduction; and his descent through the ventilator, inasmuch as it was the *only* way the gallery was accessible without the rest of the keys, never out of the treasured possession of our housekeeper!

My solution was quite satisfactory. Duchanne and Harry began dancing like mad round the room. Our hearts were relieved of an oppression perfectly sickening. Soon after, I removed the staple and bolt from the lower door, to let in the ghost we were so anxious to keep out, thinking it the best policy to let him roam at large; and I recommended Duchanne, should he intrude again, to give him a taste of the supernatural in his turn; a few loud groans delivered through a battered speaking-trumpet would frighten Jack Topham out of his senses. After dinner, we indulged in a bottle of cowslip wine, and a pot of preserves, over which our spirits rose like quicksilver in a barometer. A week's probation had passed, and there had been no detection or inquiry; conversation became animated; and Harry favoured us with a dissertation on the absurdity of the received belief in the reappearance of the spirits of the departed, which he maintained was the result of ignorance and weakness.

Another fortnight elapsed; we were within a week of Duchanne's final departure; it was arranged he should leave on the succeeding Monday. Our united means amounted to L.1, 17s. 6d., with which we conjectured he could reach Liverpool and support himself for a week. He was to pass as the son of our ballet-master, M. Degville, who, having taught him his profession, had abandoned him. He was to say his object was to reach an uncle, established in the United States, who had once assisted, and was again disposed to befriend him. This was the best way, we considered, to account for his foreign accent; and if put to the proof, he was so accomplished a dancer that it would confirm his statement. My brother and I wrote him two letters, each in the character of his supposed father, complaining of poverty, want of employment, and inability to support him any longer. We had great fun over the composition of these letters, we thought it so droll being fathers. We filled our effusions with scraps of morality such as fathers often give, but more rarely practise. We introduced the recognised old-fashioned morality of our school-copies, 'Never be deceived by appearances,' and 'Wisdom and humbleness go hand in hand.' Then we assumed great gravity, and gave imitations of the style of the actors of old men whom we had seen upon the stage. I have often smiled to think how annoyed old Degville would have been, had he known the use we made of his name: he was a stiff, proud, formal Frenchman. We interspersed our letters with a little bad French, and a few professional anecdotes, to give them credibility, at the expense of old Walker, the prompter, whom we hated, and who, we stated, had been tried and transported for bigamy! All was prepared for the succeeding Sunday night; the coach started early the following morning to Manchester. We cut Duchanne's long flowing black hair, gave him a leather cap, and went boldly to book him as an outside passenger. The daughter of the innkeeper from whose house the coach started knew me well, and asked me to take a glass of wine. Emboldened by her courtesy, I stated the place in the coach was required for young Master Degville, our ballet-master's son, who was an invalid, without means to pay the inside fare; and I tendered an assurance that I would discharge the difference at Christmas, if she would credit me up to that time; but she kindly said that no further expense should be incurred, but that my friend should travel inside for the sum already paid. This was joyful news. We got Duchanne abed at a little public-house opposite, and for that night I was his companion. In the morning, we bade him a tearful farewell, receiving a promise from him that he would write on reaching Liverpool. When we had seen him off, and watched the coach till it vanished from our sight, we went home heavy hearted, but with a deep sense of thankfulness at being relieved from our frightful responsibilities.

The next day we converted Duchanne's room into a studio, and commenced the profitable pursuit of authorship, by writing a melodrama of intense interest, founded upon the incidents of the last month, called *Destiny Defeated, or The Preserved Frenchman*, with Duchanne for the hero, whom we caused to pass through fearful perils and adventures, from which he was always rescued by our intervention.

In about a week, Duchanne's anxiously expected letter reached us; we opened it with tremulous haste; it contained the cheerless and dispiriting intelligence that all his efforts to obtain a passage had been fruitless; his enervated and unsailorlike look, and the season of the year, were against him; he was broken-spirited, and almost pennyless; his last five shillings he had given to an agent who promised to procure him a passage, but whose only object was to secure his money, and who answered his expostulations by putting his finger to his nose. He thought he could live if he could procure a guitar, by playing in the public-houses about the docks, to the sailors and their companions. How could this be obtained, was the consideration; for, humiliating as the alternative appeared, it was the only resource. I borrowed ten shillings of an old schoolfellow, with difficulty procured a one-pound note, and sent it to him. When we next heard from him, he said that he had procured employment with an ironmonger, who, hearing him play at a convivial meeting, had examined his credentials (our highly moral and parental letters), the genuineness of which was so apparent that they excited compassion for his position; the man had agreed to give him food and apparel for assisting in his shop; but his cough was frightful, the least exertion exhausted his careworn frame, and he was afraid he should be discharged from inability to accomplish his daily duty. The next letter was the last we received, and the last he ever wrote. The unforgotten record is now as visible before me as on the mournful day that I received it, and the emotions that it produced upon me still vibrate on my heart as I recall it to my memory:

'My dear, my loved Friends—I write to bid to you an eternal adieu. I have broke a blood-vessel, and I die. The light of my life is to go, and in short of time I am dead. The small of strength to me is vanquish by my grief. The efforts I have make have desolated, and at last destroy me. Oh, could I see again my country, my well loved France, and my mother, my sister! My poor mother! remember she dwell Rue Montmartre 18, and the name of my sister is Mathilde. If peace should come, guard this, and let them to know the fate of their poor Laurent, and they will thank you for much goodness to their poor boy. Good God guard you, my good, my generous friends. Do not cry for me. I am happy. I am reassured that at the latest hour the angel send a light céleste upon my soul to tell the soul there is of happiness. Adieu! My last prayer is for you, my country and my mother. Adieu, for ever, my good friends; forget not your poor Duchanne.

It was on Twelfth-day that this fatal letter arrived; we were seated with a cake and some home-made wine before us. After reading the letter a second time, to satisfy our senses of its truth, with a moment's look at each other, our heads fell upon our hands, then on the table, and we wept the first tears of real bitterness we perhaps ever shed to consecrate the memory of our lost friend, while the only words we could utter were the conclusion of his affecting letter, 'Poor, poor Duchanne!'

PUNISHMENTS IN THE GOOD OLD TIMES.

There are two ancient theories, venerable only on account of their antiquity, which are gradually becoming abandoned in all well-regulated constitutional governments. One of these theories is, that the established law by which the members of a commonwealth have agreed to be bound, revenges itself, by judicial punishment, upon those who have broken it; the other, and no less fallacious doctrine, that by submitting to such punishment, an offender makes reparation or atonement for the illegal act he has committed. Beccaria in Italy, and Bentham in our own country, followed by a whole host of subsequent writers in France and Germany, have waged strong warfare against these ideas, and have elaborately established the doctrine, that the real object of all punishment is general utility; the advantage of the community in which the offender lives; and that just in proportion as its infliction is adapted to prevent a recurrence of the crime, either by removing from the offender the possibility of its after commission, or any desire towards its perpetration, in that proportion punishment best fulfils the objects for which it is intended; and further, that all punishment ought to have as little severity as is compatible with the attainment of these two objects.

Reasonable as these views may appear to us in the nineteenth century, they seem to have been quite lost sight of in days gone by; so that sometimes only to carry out a strict and cruel law, and oftener still to minister to private revenge, offenders had their misfortunes rather than their delinquencies visited with the most severe penal inflictions. To prove this, we need only glance at that great body of ancient Roman jurisprudence, to frame which envoys were sent into Greece, and decemviri twice appointed—the law of the Twelve Tables. By one portion of this code, it is ordained that whoever shall not be able to bring any witness to prove his pretensions before the judge, may go and make a clamour for three days before his adversary's dwelling. Here, then, is an enactment made simply to minister to private revenge, and which we need scarcely say might be used in the most iniquitous manner.

Again, 'if the debtor refuses to pay his debts, and can find no surety, his creditor may take him home, and either tie him by the neck, or put irons upon his feet to the weight of fifteen pounds.' It may be urged that this punishment had for its object the compelling of the debtor to settle the claim; but compare it with the mode of proceeding where the debtor *cannot* satisfy the demand: 'If the debtor be insolvent to several creditors, let his body be cut in pieces on the third market-day. It may be cut into more or fewer pieces. Or if the creditors consent, let him be sold to foreigners beyond the Tiber.' The first part of this enactment can, it is obvious, only be intended to punish a man for running into debt, and the creditor will not obtain the least benefit by its infliction: it is a mere legal revenge.

In criminal matters, these laws were every whit as cruel: 'Whoever shall maliciously set fire to another man's house, or to a heap of corn near his house, shall be imprisoned, scourged, and burnt to death.—Whoever slanders another, shall be beaten with a club.—Let every false witness be thrown down headlong from the Capitol.—If any one steals what is devoted to the gods, let him be sewn up in a sack, and thrown into the Tiber.—If a slave rob, let him be beaten with rods, and thrown headlong from the Capitol, &c.' The element of cruelty, so very prominent in the Roman, as well as in all other ancient laws, survived the destruction of many more worthy matters during the middle ages, and was freely admitted into the statute-book of our own country until a few years ago; and we think that a comparison of the crimes and punishments known to our ancestors, with those now in existence, affords a valuable insight into the progress that has been made towards a more merciful and more intelligent system of criminal jurisprudence.

The highest offence recognised by the law of England, and the one deserving of the most exemplary punishment, is, and ever has been, treason—an offence, the definition of which, framed in the fifth year of King Edward III., has descended to the present time: 'The compassing or imagining the death of our lord the king, or of our lady his queen, or of their eldest son and heir; .... the levying war against our lord the king in his realm, the adhering to the king's enemies in his realm; .... the counterfeiting the king's great or privy seal, or his money; .... the bringing false money into the realm; .... the slaying the chancellor, or the treasurer, or the king's justices of one bench or the other, or justices in eyre, or of assize, or any other manner of justices, in their place, doing their office.' For these crimes, death was the lightest punishment that could be inflicted; and this punishment was ordered to be undergone in the most fearful manner. First, the attainted person was to be *drawn* to the place of execution. Originally, this drawing was effected by tying the culprit's feet to the tail of a horse, and so dragging him to the scaffold, with nothing between his bare back and the road. As early as the reign of Edward I., however, a hurdle was interposed, and so the severity of the punishment much lessened. Arrived at the place of execution, he was to be hanged by the neck for a few moments, and, whilst living, cut down, and then, being bound living to a stake, was to be embowelled, and his heart and other viscera were to be 'burnt before his face.' His head being then cut off with a butcher's knife, and his body divided into four parts, he was to be exposed in the more conspicuous places of the town where the execution took place, or in some other locality fixed upon by the sovereign.

Such was the punishment for 'high treason'—'a punishment,' says Sir E. Coke, 'warranted by holy scripture; for Joab was drawn, Bigthan hanged, and Judas embowelled—these all being traitors to their masters;' and he adds: 'It is a punishment undoubtedly just, for our liege lord the king is lord of every one of our members, and they have severally conspired against him, and should each one suffer.'

But how did this horrible punishment act, so far as regarded preventing the offence, and awing others by the exhibition? As a matter of fact, there were ten times as many persons tried and executed for treason during any one year of the continuance of the severe laws against it, as there have been since the abolition of those laws. Treason at the present time is all but an unknown offence. True, the government of our country has of late years undergone an entire change, and there is far less cause for serious discontent than formerly; but no one can allow that the severity of the punishment in any way contributed to the cessation of the offence.

As to the effect which these judicial tortures produced upon persons beholding them, let our old friend Samuel Pepys, Esq., say a word:

'*October* 13, 1660.—I went out to Charing Cross, to see Major-general Harrison hanged, drawn, and quartered, which was done there, he looking as cheerful *as any man could do in that condition.*

'He was presently cut down, and his heart shewn to the people, *at which there was great shouts of joy.* It is said that he said he was sure to come shortly at the right hand of Christ to judge them that now had judged him, and that his wife do expect his coming again..... Setting up shelves in my study.'

The uniform punishment inflicted upon *women* for treason was, to be drawn to a place of execution, and then burnt alive; and this was not legally abolished until the year 1788. The present punishment for the offence is, in the case of males, to be drawn, hanged, and divided, their bodies to be at the disposal of the sovereign; and of females, to be drawn and hanged simply. The crown has it in its power, in all cases by warrant under the sign-manual, to remit any portion of either of these punishments.

Counterfeiting the seals of the kingdom, which was also high treason, and, before the beginning of the present century, punished in the manner we have described, is now only visited with transportation or imprisonment.

Next in atrocity to high treason came the offences of parricide and petty treason. Petty treason was the killing of the husband by the wife, of the master by the servant, and of his superior by an ecclesiastic. In each of these cases the offence was more than mere murder, as it involved a breach of the allegiance due from the offending party. Petty treason was therefore treated as a species of aggravated murder, and the convicted person was ordered to be drawn as well as hanged.

Herodotus tells us that the Persians considered the crime of parricide so impossibly awful, that they declared no one had ever been, or could ever be guilty of the offence; and they had, therefore, no special punishment for it. But this was not the case with all ancient nations. The Egyptians punished parricides by sticking pointed reeds into every portion of their bodies, and then throwing them upon a fire of burning thorns, until they were consumed; and the Roman law ordered parricides to be sewed up in a leathern bag with a dog, a cock, a viper, and an ape, and to be thrown into the sea; while it is said, on fair authority, that the Druids punished parricides, and the murder of a mistress by a female servant, with burning alive.

The offence of petty treason was abolished, or rather merged into that of murder, a few years ago, and the punishment of both these crimes made the same.

Next in atrocity to the above offences is the awful crime of wilful murder, uniformly punished for ages past with death.

Prior to the reign of Henry III., the mode of executing criminals varied; but since that time, *hanging* has been the means almost invariably resorted to. For many years, in atrocious cases, the court was accustomed to order that the criminal should be hung in chains after death, and this addition which, until 1752, formed no part of the *legal* sentence, but was in the discretion of the judge, was perhaps intended not so much to inculcate a terror of the crime itself, as to satisfy the friends of the deceased—the murderer in such a position being, in the words of the civil law, 'a pleasant and comfortable sight to the relations of him who was murdered.' In 1752, hanging in chains was directed to form part of the legal judgment in certain cases, as well as dissection—the latter being performed at the expense of the county in which the crime was committed, and usually costing L.40.

There was one species of crime, formerly punishable by death, from which the additional indignity of hanging in chains was never omitted, and this was piracy. All pirates brought to England for trial were, anciently, according to Stowe, hanged at low-water at the east side of the Tower, where St

Katherine's Wharf is now situated; and having remained there until three tides had washed over their bodies, they were removed, and gibbeted elsewhere. London increasing in extent, the place of execution was removed further down the river, and within the last forty years, pirates were executed by the river-side at a place still called 'Execution Dock;' and their bodies, after hanging there until the tide washed the feet, were taken down, bound round with iron bands, pitched, and gibbeted in a row on the strand of the river, between Greenwich and Woolwich, a terrible sight to all mariners going in and out of the port of London.

In the year 1531, one John Roose, the cook to the Bishop of Rochester, wickedly threw into a large pot of broth which he was making for the family, a quantity of poison, by means whereof fourteen persons were killed. This horrible act called forth a special statute, the 22 Henry VIII., by which John Roose himself, and all future poisoners, were ordered to be *boiled to death.* This fearful sentence was duly carried into effect on the cook; and eleven years afterwards, one Margaret Davy suffered the same awful punishment in Smithfield. The statute was, however, abolished in the first year of Edward VI.'s reign, as being unnecessarily severe; and all poisoners were ordered to be, for the future, punished like other murderers, by hanging.

Maiming was punished for a long period by a species of retaliation, on the principle of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' Arson was first punishable with death by burning, and afterwards with the pains and penalties attached to treason.

It would be neither interesting nor profitable to run through the long catalogue of lesser crimes and misdemeanours and their punishments. All of the slightest atrocity were visited with death; the rest with certain corporeal indignities—with fine and imprisonment, or with imprisonment alone. The practice of transportation did not commence until 1590, and was for long afterwards extremely limited. Until the times of George IV., stealing from the person, stealing in a dwelling-house to the value of 40s., cattle and sheep stealing, returning from transportation, forgery, uttering forged instruments, coining, highway robbery, and a vast number of other crimes, were all legally punishable with death; and in most cases that penalty was inflicted. In the thirty-eight years during which Henry VIII. was upon the throne, no less than 72,000 criminals were executed, and in succeeding reigns, the number was very slightly diminished.

It would be idle to attempt to urge that any particular horror of crime was engendered in the public mind by these legal butcheries. People high and low were wonderfully careless of human life, and thought little or nothing about an execution. In Jersey, for instance, during the sixteenth century, hanging was so common, that the clerk of the criminal court, probably not being a rapid writer, did not even take the trouble to make a proper record of the sentence of death being pronounced, contenting himself by inserting the criminal's name, and by drawing opposite to it a rude sketch of a gallows with a man suspended therefrom; and in the rolls of that period still preserved in the island, whole columns of such primitive entries may be seen.*

It is indeed a notorious fact, that as our laws became less bloody, the crimes for the punishment of which they were intended decreased in number. The parliamentary returns shew, that in triennial periods ending 1820, 1830, 1840, and 1850, the number of executions in this country were respectively 312, 178, 62, and 37; and this immense saving of life was certainly not productive of any injury to society at large.

In addition to the offences we have described, there are one or two which, on account of the insight they give us into the rude state of our commonwealth in bygone times, it may be worth while to notice.

The first of these relates to the offence of 'striking within the king's court to the extent of drawing blood.'

Every crime in olden times was, and still is, considered to involve *a breach of the sovereign's peace*—a derangement of that quiet and orderly state of affairs which is essential to the welfare of the community; and the nearer this breach of the peace occurs to the person of the sovereign, the more serious is the offence supposed to be; hence an assault committed within the verge of a dwelling where the sovereign was actually 'demurrant and abiding,' was, during the time of our Saxon constitution, considered so serious, that the life of the offender could alone atone for the act. At the Conquest, the law relating to such crimes was considerably relaxed, and the right hand only of the culprit was forfeited. In the reign of Henry VIII., assaults becoming very frequent among the fiery nobility of the court, and the law having fallen into desuetude, an act of parliament was made, establishing a court for the speedy trial of all such offenders; and it may not be uninteresting to copy one or two of the quaint clauses of that act:

'That the serjeant or chief surgeon for the time being, or his deputy, shall be ready at the time and place of execution, to sear the stump when the hand is so smitten off.

'And the serjeant of the pantry shall be also then and there ready to give bread to the party that shall have his hand so smitten off.

'And the serjeant of the cellar shall be also then and there ready with a pot of red wine to give the same party drink after his hand is so smitten off and the stump seared.

'And the master-cook shall be also then and there ready, and shall bring with him a dressing-knife, and shall deliver the said knife at the place of execution to the serjeant of the larder, who shall be also then and there ready, and hold upright the said dressing-knife till execution be done.

'And the yeoman of the poultry shall be also then and there ready *with a cock in his hand, for the surgeon to wrap about the same stump, when the hand shall be so smitten off.*

'And the groom of the salcery shall be then and there ready with vinegar and cold water, to give attendance upon the said surgeon till execution be done.

In addition to losing his right hand, the unfortunate criminal was imprisoned for life, and this punishment for striking in the king's palace, or in a court of justice—where, by implication of law, the king was always personally present—continued to be law from 1542 to 1829, a period of 287 years.

'Setting in the pillory' was probably the most *unjust* mode of punishment ever invented, its severity entirely depending upon the public feeling. Men of almost unexceptionable character, who had the misfortune to publish something distasteful to the government of the day, have been more than once very nearly killed, where the feeling of the mob was against them; while, on the other hand, the vilest miscreants were often protected and cheered during their exposure.

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* Townsend, an experienced Bow Street officer, being examined in 1816 before the House of Commons as to the diminution of capital punishments, stated, that in his time he had known seven persons (four men and three women) hanged together for robbing a pedler; and that in 1783 he had seen forty people hanging together at the Old Bailey! A few years later, the jailer of Newgate, being asked by the recorder how many could be hung together upon the new drop, coolly replied: 'Well, your worship, we *can* hang twelve; but we can't hang more than ten *comfortably!*'

When William Parsons, in whose house took place the affair of the 'Cock-lane-ghost' was pilloried, the mob formed a ring round the scaffold, and not only preserved him from the least mark of indignity, but actually made a subscription for him amongst the thousands collected to witness his 'punishment.' Not unfrequently, indeed, the authorities themselves acted in a similar manner; and after a Dr Shebbeare had been in the pillory for publishing a political libel, the under-sheriff was fined L.50, and imprisoned two months, for allowing the doctor to be attended on the platform by a servant in livery, who held an umbrella over his head, and for omitting to confine his head and arms in the pillory.

For numerous offences, 'burning in the hand' certain letters with a red-hot iron, in addition to imprisonment, was imposed; and it being discovered that such marks could be obliterated from the hand, an act of William III.'s reign ordered that they should be made 'on the left cheek, near the nose;' and so the law continued till, a few years afterwards, there was a removal of the branding back to its old place on the hand, 'in the brawn of the thumb.' Burning in the hand continued till 1829; and in the docks of many old assize-courts, there yet remain the post and iron rings by which the sufferer was secured while the operation was performed, as directed by the law, in open court.

But we have said enough, and perhaps too much, about such barbarities. They have now, all of them, been expunged from our statute-book; and the wonder is, that they should have remained there so long. At the present day, although, by the strict letter of our law, two or three offences are still made capital, the punishment of death is never inflicted unless for wilful murder—all lesser crimes being visited with transportation, penal servitude, imprisonment with or without hard labour, whipping, and fines.

In other European states, certain severe penal inflictions are still in use, but they are continually becoming less and less frequent, and governments are daily giving proof of their conviction that the careful prevention of crime is to be far more considered than the severity of its punishment; and that there are more certain means of securing the safety of the sovereign and the peaceable existence of the commonwealth, than the practice, hitherto so common, of writing the pages of the criminal law in letters of blood.

THE BULL-FIGHT.

At daylight on the morning of the Feast of St John, all the lower orders of the population, in the pleasant little town of Puerto Santa Maria, on the Bay of Cadiz, were astir to see the driving in of the bulls destined to shew sport in the afternoon in the Plaza de Toros. Among the crowd were five Englishmen, of whom the present writer was one. As it is proposed to try and describe the bull-fight at length, we may as well tell what we know of the bulls themselves.

These noble animals, very different from any of the bovine race usually seen in this country, are reared in the mountains far away from civilised life. In Andalucia there exist large *haciendas* or estates for the express purpose of rearing them. These estates in time get famous, or the reverse, for the excellence of their breed, like the stud breeding-stables for race-horses among us. Upon them, the young bulls are allowed to roam perfectly wild for seven or eight years, and during that time, are never brought in contact with man, oftener than is necessary to brand or reclaim them when straying.

When the programme of an impending bull-fight is issued, the hacienda from which the bulls are to come is specified, and often the stock from which they are descended; sometimes even the sum they cost is stated, and of course the more it is, the finer bulls the public are led to expect. We remember one bull-fight in which L.30 apiece was paid for the bulls: there were eight of them; and seeing that the whole eight were to be killed in the Plaza for mere sport, the flesh rendered uneatable, and the hides spoiled, the money actually thrown away on the occasion was something considerable.

It is first necessary for those who have charge of the herd to separate the number required for the Plaza from their wild companions. On the night preceding the bull-fight, arrangements are made for driving in the bulls, and this part of the performance is the one that the Spaniard takes to most kindly. Bull-fighting with him quite occupies the place of our own field-sports; there is therefore always a host ready and able to assist, in the very difficult and somewhat dangerous task of driving in the bulls from the country. A number of tame oxen are procured, and trained to their respective tasks. When all is ready, and the signal given to start, the wild bulls are collected by men on horseback, armed with lances, and driven to the place where the tame oxen are waiting for them. These place themselves one on each side of a wild bull, and with a couple of steady old oxen leading the bovicade, and another pair closing it, a start is effected. On either side run a number of men on foot, armed with slings, with which their dexterity is very great. They can discharge a stone as big as one's fist with unerring aim at an offending bull, and generally manage to hit him on one of the horns. The men with lances bring up the rear, and occasionally dash forward, and prod any one of their flock who is disposed to stop, break his ranks, or be otherwise unruly.

The first part of the journey is performed at moderate speed, which is gradually accelerated as the bovicade nears the Plaza. For the last few miles, in the gray of the morning, the sight is picturesque in the extreme. The speed is gradually increased to a wild gallop, with heads down, and tails in air, the footmen shouting, and the horsemen swearing; and on such occasions as this, none can equal a Spaniard for noise. As they enter the narrow streets of the town, the uproar is redoubled, and the beasts urged to the top of their speed, while a perfect hail-storm of pebbles is discharged on their devoted heads by the slingers on either flank. Woe betide any unfortunate who comes in the way; down he must go, though he were the Cid himself. With due respect for military intrepidity, we cannot think that any infantry square in the world could resist such a charge. As they near the Plaza, the gates are opened, the whole enter with a furious rush, and are brought to a stand, still trembling with rage and weariness, and streaming from every pore. After a little delay, each pair of tame oxen are instructed to take their pupil into the stall prepared for him; they themselves are cleverly withdrawn, and the door locked on the unfortunate beast, not to be opened till the afternoon, when he has to face his death in the sight of ten thousand people.

On some special occasions, of which the present is one, after the bulls have been safely housed, one of them is turned out again into the Plaza for the amusement of the rabble. This bull is called the Toro Aguardiente, or Brandied Bull; not because he, poor beast, has had his dram before his début, but because most of the rabble who contemplate going into the ring to try his mettle, have had theirs. No sooner had this bull appeared in the Plaza, than twenty men and boys, more or less, leaped over the barriers, and commenced tormenting him in every way they could devise, some taking off their ragged jackets or cloaks and shaking them in his face, others irritating him with bits of red cloth; but no lethal weapons are allowed in this sort of encounter, as the bull has to be returned to his stall, whole and sound for the afternoon's sport. The bull, on his part, was not slow to accept the challenges so valorously thrown out; and in a few moments the ragged rout were flying helter-skelter, and climbing over the barriers out of his way on all sides. Still, much coolness and science in the art of bull-baiting were displayed by his tormentors, and many a one stood his charge with as much *aplomb* as an experienced matador, quietly stepping on one side, as the bull charged furiously at his shaking rags. On a sudden, however, the play was changed into earnest, and there occurred a catastrophe which we Englishmen were quite unprepared for, as we had the greatest confidence in the capability of Spaniards to take care of themselves, even in the teeth of an infuriated bull. One of the unfortunate rabble, who had partaken rather too freely of the aforesaid aguardiente, stumbled in trying to avoid the rush of the bull, and before he could recover himself, was completely transfixed by his horns. A sensation of horror ran through the crowd, and for a moment paralysed all; then several of them rushed to the rescue of their unfortunate comrade, but the momentary pause had sealed his fate, and enabled the bull to complete his work. When the unfortunate man was released, his case was hopeless; once after being completely tossed into the air, he had been for some seconds carried about the Plaza dangling on the horns of the infuriated beast. During this time, one of the most celebrated matadors in Spain, who was engaged for the afternoon's bull-fight, remained a passive spectator of the scene, quietly smoking his cigar. From his professional knowledge and coolness, he might very probably have saved the life of the man, if so inclined. He, however, smoked on unmoved till the tragedy was played out, and we fancied that his soliloquy was taking some such turn as this: 'Caramba! these people see me every day in the Plaza, and think my life is all *couleur de rose;* now they will perceive the difference, and know what a professional bull-fighter faces every time he enters the ring.' Be this as it may, the matador smoked on, the unfortunate victim was carried off, and the sport went on as before. I need hardly say that we had had enough of it for that morning (it was not then six o'clock A.M.), and went home to breakfast with what appetite we might.

The bull-fight itself is advertised for four o'clock in the afternoon; and those wise in such matters have secured their seats days before on the shady side of the Plaza. This is an immense circular building like the old Roman Colosseum, open at top, and with seats rising tier above tier, capable of containing 12,000 or 14,000 spectators, who are separated from the arena by a stout wooden barrier, eight or ten feet high, with recesses every here and there, used as harbours of refuge by the performers.

Since the middle of the day, business has been almost suspended, and all conversation hinges on the approaching spectacle. The Andalucians, gentle and simple, crowd to this favourite sport as we, more enlightened Cockneys, do to the Derby, and for this day at least throw care to the winds. For this occasion, the conventional square-cut coat and chimney-pot hat of civilised Europe are laid aside, and the true Spaniard, proud of his country and his knowledge of *toromuchia*, or the gentle art of bull-fighting, appears in all the glory of *majo* costume. This national dress is certainly most striking and picturesque, and, for a bull-fight, is assumed by most true Spaniards and many fast foreigners. There is the aristocrat of the bluest *sangre azul*, from his estate in the country; the banker who, two hours ago, gave you a *rouleau* of five-franc pieces or pillar dollars over his counter; the peasant, with face nearly as brown as his own pig-skin wine-bottle; the substantial farmer on horseback, with his wife astride in front of him, and gun by his side; the tailor's apprentice; and Mozo from the hotel—in fact, everybody, not omitting the traditional barber, who still lives and flourishes in Andalucia: even he has left his guitar and brass basin for a few hours, and all in majo dress are crowding to the Plaza de Toros.

This majo dress is very rich and pretty; and as possibly many may never have seen it, we will describe it. To begin with the head, crowned then, as always, with the pretty Spanish hat, with its two balls, and having a rim conveniently turned up for carrying cigars in dry weather, and acting as a reservoir for rain in wet. The collar and breast visible of a spotless shirt, made of the finest linen, often from China, and costing ever so much a yard, tied at the throat with a crimson ribbon; an embroidered waistcoat, with many rows of silver pendent buttons, and jacket of particularly fine cloth, very short in the waist, and profusely ornamented with silver buttons and clasps; on the sleeves of this upper garment are many ornamental devices, worked in various coloured velvets, and beautiful to see. A gorgeous silk sash unites the above to the gentleman's breeches. These are likewise decorated with silver buttons and expensive braid on the outside seam, and tied at the knees with cords and tassels of black silk. Below these come a pair of most exquisitely stamped white leather gaiters, for the manufacture of which Seville is very famous. Untanned shoes, tied with green silk strings, complete our majo's costume. With a loose extra jacket like a hussar's encumbrance thrown over one arm, a variegated stick, in keeping with the rest of the attire, nearly as tall as a young *Alpenstock*, and a cigar in his mouth, behold our majo ready to enjoy his national pastime. We must apologise for omitting to make mention of the ladies; but there they are, in the charming Andalucian mantilla, with flowers in their hair, and dressed in other respects as for a *fiesta*. They are in much such numbers as we see at our own race-courses—not so many as the men, but perhaps making up one-third of the spectators.

It is now nearly four o'clock, and having taken our seats advisedly in the shade, we proceed to survey the immense mass of people in front of us, broiling in the hot sun, and boiling over with expectation and excitement. Having been presented in the morning with a fine camellia, we have unthinkingly made our appearance with it still in our button-hole. Gradually, a great uproar has arisen on the further side of the Plaza, and we notice that many curious eyes in our own neighbourhood are directed towards us. Being ignorant of any cause for such close regard, we behave as Englishmen usually do under like circumstances; become first curious, then indignant, and finally, as the noise excessively increases—and evidently does so for our especial behoof—try to appear as if it touched us not; in fact, as if it was no business of ours how ill other people behaved. However, when the clamour waxed exceeding great, and threats began to take the place of the endearments hitherto profusely showered upon us, a neighbouring Spanish gentleman politely intimated, that it was the wish of the public that the camellia should be transferred from our button-hole to a pretty girl who sat directly in front of us. Our ignorance of the language had prevented our appreciating this request before; but as we pride ourselves upon our politeness, and are always happy to take a reasonable proposition in good part, the transfer was immediately made, highly to the lady's amusement, and not altogether to our own discomfiture. The popular note was instantly changed to a 'Viva Ingles;' and the fickle public dismissed us from their thoughts, to attack an unfortunate man in a white hat, which they eventually made him take off, compelling him to sit out the performance with no other head-covering than the one nature had bestowed upon him. Having plenty of leisure for looking round before the performance commences, we see from 10,000 to 14,000 people, arranged in a circle, tier above tier, and dressed in all possible colours. Immediately beneath us is the mayor's box, who is the master of the ceremonies; and below that, the orchestra, filled with the magnificent band of the artillery, who are not allowed to rest from their labours an instant by the clamorous 'gods' opposite in the sun; and underneath the orchestra is the door by which the bulls enter the Plaza—now strewed with sand like a gigantic Astley's—and it speedily opens to admit the matador and his train. The notes of one of the artillery trumpets usher in the human and equine part of the *dramatis personæ;* the bovine are still safe in their dens. The procession consists of the chief matador and his assistant or second matador, eight or ten of the running-footmen of the company, called *chulillos*, each carrying a gaudy-coloured cloak; the three picadors on horseback, wonderfully padded, with defensive armour of all sorts, in the shape of quilted cotton jackets, breastplates of very thick card-board, &c., and carrying lances. The procession is closed by teams of oxen and mules, gaily decorated, whose duty it is to drag out the slain. These all file into the Plaza, and draw up opposite the mayor's box, making him a profound salam. The matador, who is supposed to be the 'captain of the crew,' advances and makes a short speech, to which his worship returns an equally short answer. The picadors then move forward, and rest the points of their lances on the edge of his worship's box, whilst the latter performs upon them a certain operation.

According to the season of the year, so is the temper of the bulls; and as is the temper of the bulls, so are the points of the lances; that is to say, the lances have shifting points, that slide up and down like the joints of a telescope, so that the hide of the bull can never be penetrated with them above a certain distance, and it is this distance that his worship regulates with a measure, according to the time of year. We believe, the hotter the weather, the more ferocious are the bulls, and consequently the longer are the points of the lances; and in cold weather, that this is reversed. The bull, to be sure, will be killed by and by, but not by the picador; his sole object is to irritate and drive him mad, and the lance is so graduated as just to effect this, and give sufficient hold to enable the picador, if skilful, with a moderately good horse, to check the bull in his rush, and keep him at arms-length. The whole *quadrilla* (the term for the company) are magnificently dressed in much the same costume as we are accustomed to see worn by Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*. Jackets of silk and velvet, of all colours of the rainbow, with breeches to match, and white silk stockings. The matador himself is as gorgeous as a pheasant from the Himalaya, and has his jacket covered with expensive lace. One of these, made for the celebrated matador El Chiclanero, which we saw in Seville, the tailor informed us, cost four hundred dollars. The picadors, as already mentioned, are padded from head to heel—in fact, so much padded, that they are quite as unwieldy as turtles; and when one is turned on his back by the charge of the bull, can seldom recover his proper position without assistance. They wear immense broad-brimmed straw hats, fashioned like those in which we see Chinamen depicted, with an extinguisher-like projection on the top. All the performers have immense tufts of false hair, or something to represent it, attached to the backs of their heads.

Whilst we have been putting the final touch to the costumery, the picadors have taken up their posts on the left-hand side of the door from which the bull is to issue, close to the barrier, one behind the other, with perhaps fifteen or twenty feet between them. The horses are always blindfolded, and consist of the most wretched animals that can be procured. Poor things, nine out of ten are sure to fall victims, and it would not pay, we presume, to risk better cattle. Again the trumpet sounds. The first of the eight bulls destined for the sacrifice, on the door being opened, dashes into the ring. He is a noble beast, jet-black, in fine condition, having a pair of blue streamers fixed to his withers by a pin. A pin, more or less, makes no matter to him at present; and it serves, moreover, to infuriate him. A connoisseur near us remarks: 'Ah, he is a fine bull, but his horns are too far apart to do much mischief;' and so it turns out. He advances into the middle of the arena, and calmly surveys the audience, who immediately attack him with the most uncalled-for reproaches; and if we believe half of what they say of him, must conclude that his 'toroship' came of a very disreputable family indeed. As if by accident, his eye falls upon one of the picadors. The men on foot he has sleepily regarded half-a-dozen times without notice; now that a horse is in the case, how changed is his manner! For a second, he gazes intently; the next moment down goes his head, and with his tail in the air, he charges straight at the horseman. The man is skilful, and receives him on the point of his lance, turning him aside, and, as it were, passing him on to the next, who, however, is not so fortunate; he has his guard broken, and in an instant the bull's horns are buried in the unfortunate horse, who, with his rider, is hurled to the ground. The bull then turns to the third picador, but meets with a warm reception, and returns to the overthrown horseman, who is trying to shelter himself behind his dying horse.

Now advance the chulillos with their coloured cloaks, who, by exposing themselves, and waving the flaunting things in his face, draw the bull off from his would-be victim. The latter is helped to his legs, 'shaken up a bit,' like Mr Smallweed, and assisted out, to get him a fresh horse. This sort of performance is repeated, until perhaps three or four horses have been killed, and many others wounded. The mayor, by a nod of the head, or some other sign to the matador, now intimates that we have had enough of this part of the play. This bull, on the whole, has been considered by the amateurs as a fair average bull, but not particularly good, and has lately given up assuming the offensive, a sure sign that he has had nearly enough. The picadors withdraw from the Plaza, and the chulillos proceed to affix the bandarillos, or little paper-flags, to the neck of the bull. This is a very dangerous sport, and requires great dexterity and caution. Up to this time, the matador has stood with his arms folded, looking on. His second in command opens the ball with the bandarillos, and fixes one or two pair remarkably well. To achieve this feat, it is necessary to watch till the bull catches your eye, and when he puts down his head for a rush, to run in quickly, and stick one of these torments, furnished with barbs, on each side of his withers. In turn, the various party-coloured jackets plant their bandarillos, or fail in the attempt, often only being able to fix one. On the occasion of one of these failures, the great matador himself looks round at the audience, in a half-pitying, half-sneering sort of way at his subordinate's want of skill, and taking a pair of bandarillos himself, proceeds to fix them, as it were, by way of apology. They are, according to public opinion, beautifully placed—firm as rocks, and perfectly upright—whereas every one hitherto has fallen down when the bull moved. El Chiclanero is vociferously applauded, graciously bows his acknowledgments, and retires again into his shell as before. This goes on for some time, till the unfortunate bull is a walking mass of sticks and coloured paper, blood streaming profusely down his sides. During the whole performance, the noise is excessive; our friends in the sun roaring at the top of their voices, praising some of the performances, abusing others; complimenting the bull, or calling him all the bad names in the Spanish language—and they are a good many—according as he shewed pluck or the reverse; in fact, as a proof of this excessive uproar, we can honestly affirm that we have heard the roaring of a Plaza de Toros when in full blast at upwards of a mile.

Now our gentlemanlike and impressive matador comes into play. He has ere this observed that the bull's shoulders are nearly as full of darts as they can hold; that his 'properties' in this particular are nearly exhausted; that the public, in place of calling his men names, are beginning to abuse each other, a sure sign that they want novelty; and so he has betaken himself to a long straight two-edged sword, with a very sharp point, and a little red flag on a stick. Armed in this manner, he presents himself before the mayor, and craves permission to finish the fight and the bull; this permission is graciously granted; and throwing his hat away, to intimate, we presume, that he means to do or die, he advances to his victim. He, poor beast, wonders—if he has any wonder left in him—what this new kind of torment may be, the flag being different from any he has seen hitherto. If nervous and frightened, he retreats, and the matador follows; in this case, he becomes a very difficult bull to kill; if simply enraged, he charges; the matador steps on one side, and as the bull's head is enveloped in the flag, the sword is buried to the hilt between the shoulder-blades; he makes a few staggering steps, falls on his knees, game to the last, and often dies in that position. If not quite dead, one of the assistants comes with a short dagger, and gives him the *coup de grâce* behind the horns. The matador withdraws his sword, wipes it on his flag, makes his bow to his worship and the audience, and is applauded or not, as the deed is considered well or ill done. Sometimes this death-stroke is so cleverly delivered, that the audience rise *en masse*, and shower every practicable loose article upon the fortunate matador, by way of applause. We once witnessed a striking instance of this: a very fine bull rushed, as he ought to do, upon the Chiclanero, who was waiting to give him the final thrust; the sword entered to the hilt, and the bull fell at his feet on the instant, as if struck by a cannon-shot, and never moved again. We never saw this more than once, and it was then, I believe, considered a marvellous stroke; in a moment the Chiclanero was enveloped in a perfect storm of dollars, copper coins of all denominations, cigars, hats, sticks, cloaks, mantillas, and, in short, any small matter that came readiest to hand, while the uproar of applause was deafening. We saw him with our own eyes collect two or three hats full of cigars, in the hats so kindly bestowed upon him. We may mention, while upon this subject, that when a bull bleeds copiously from the mouth after the final thrust, he is considered to be very unskilfully killed, and the matador is unmercifully hissed in consequence.

Not to weary our readers with too many repetitions of the same thing, suffice it to say that eight bulls are slain, more or less, in the same manner, dragged out one after another, the dead horses removed, sand scattered over the too manifest signs of fight, and the artillery band again in great force between whiles. We cannot, however, in justice to one of the finest animals that ever wore horns—namely, bull No. 3, on the above occasion, omit to mention his valiant deeds. He was a very large, perfectly red bull, very powerful, and though not in the best condition as regarded fat, full of limb and muscle; his horns were pronounced perfect, and we think it will be allowed he knew how to use them. When the door was opened, instead of rushing instantly into the arena, he stood for a moment in the doorway till his eye fell upon the nearest picador; in an instant he was upon him, and over went horse and man as if of cards; the second and the third were treated in like manner without a pause, the several events happening in less time than it has taken to write these few words descriptive of them; and when the noble bull halted, and looked round, as if saying, 'Bring more,' the applause that greeted him exceeded anything we ever heard even in a Plaza de Toros. Each horse was killed dead by a single stab in the chest, the horn having in each case reached the heart. For a few minutes, the business of the Plaza was at a stand-still, while the picadors, who were all unhurt, proceeded to supply themselves with fresh steeds. It was most wonderful to us that one of them at least was able to mount again; he had been overthrown with such violence, that his head—certainly somewhat protected by his Chinese hat, and probably not furnished with many more brains than sufficed for bull-fighting purposes—acting as a battering-ram, had forced in one of the stout planks forming the barrier behind him: the concussion was most audible, nevertheless he soon made his appearance, remounted, and apparently none the worse. This scene was repeated over and over again with slight variation, till no less than thirteen horses, slain by this one bull, lay dead in the Plaza. Public feeling had by this time reached its highest pitch; and when the Chiclanero, declining to produce more horses for slaughter, purposed to affix the bandarillos, and proceed to the final act of the tragedy, the whole body of people rose as one man, and shouted with one voice for the respite and liberation of the noble beast, without subjecting him to further torture. This being rather an unusual proceeding, the matador and his worship the mayor were rather puzzled how to act, but the populace would take no denial, and the officials were obliged to yield to the mighty voice, crying, 'Qui viva El Toro.' During this pause in the proceedings, the bull stood in the centre of the arena, as it were at bay, surveying the great assemblage, lashing his sides with his tail, and occasionally throwing a cloud of dust over his back with his fore-feet, as if in defiance of the whole quadrilla. It being decided that his life should be spared, the difficulty now was to induce him to accept the boon; over and over again did the chulillos try to draw him to the exit-door with their gay cloaks, but with no effect; he would not stir, or if he did, only to make a rush at his nearest would-be benefactor, returning to his post in the centre of the Plaza. He was evidently waiting for more horses upon which to wreak his fury, and utterly despised the poor human mites. As a last resource, tame oxen were introduced, and even to these, for some time, he paid no attention; in fact, at first, with his eyes blinded by rage and excitement, he took them for the cavalry he anticipated, charging them once and again in a semi-vicious style; however, they surrounded him at last, and walked off to the door, with Toro in the midst. Close to the exit lay a slain horse, and on passing it all his fury broke forth again; he rushed away from his tame companions, gave the dead horse a mighty toss with his horns, and this final defiance achieved, proudly followed his companions from the Plaza. Such a magnanimous exit roused all public sympathy in his favour, and as he disappeared, a round of cheering broke forth that no doubt was most gratifying to him. It was sad to think, after all, that he would probably not survive, having been so wounded by the lances of the picadors, as to render him unfit for breeding, for which purpose he was well worthy to be kept.

THE POETRY OF MIDDLE AGE.

Although we have good authority for the belief that 'the Poetry of Life is never dead,' the general opinion has been always slow to credit it. Poetry is thought to be to Youth very much as the measles are to Childhood; it rarely makes upon us a second attack, and still more seldom seizes us for the first time, in Maturity. When a gentleman gets round, and bald, and addicted to dropping asleep for a few minutes after dinner, it seems to be universally agreed upon that he had better give up the writing of verses. It is held, indeed, scarcely decorous for a professional man of any standing to devote even his leisure hours to the muse. We are told that Mr Samuel Rogers's second volume of poems lost the banking-house one of its richest clients. The gentleman incontinently withdrew his money from the custody of a firm, one of whom was openly and unblushingly addicted to—rhyming. 'Sir,' affirmed he, when remonstrated with, 'if I knew that my banker had ever even *said* a good thing, I would close my account with him the next morning.' To have written such, and in verse too, was in his eyes almost a declaration of insolvency. The world certainly shares in this opinion to a considerable extent. Our few professional bards are alone permitted to be exceptions to the rule, and that is rather because, by virtue of their calling, they are not supposed to grow old at all. The idea of 'old Mr Tennyson'—although by the mere register the Laureate must be 'getting up in years,' as one of his parodists has it—is little short of blasphemous, and not to be entertained by a cultivated mind.

What are myrtles and wreaths to the brow that is wrinkled?
They're like a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled,

says a poet, who himself was not permitted to see forty summers; after that epoch, it is 'winters' only which bards see, if their own writings are to be evidence. The late decision at the Crystal Palace, which adjudged the first laurel to a young lady, and the second to a boy of sixteen years of age, will confirm the above opinion.

Still, it seems strange that Life should form poetical materials to those only who have never experienced its trials; that Love should only be sung of before marriage; that Death should be mourned in song, only by those who have never lost a child. We have, however, in the volume before us,* a protest of the most persuasive kind against this inconsistency—a book more pregnant with solemn feeling, with loving, calm philosophy, than any we have met with since the *In Memoriam*. The glow from the embers of the hearth-fire flickers upon every page; not brightly, nor even cheerfully, but leaving half in that suggestful shadow far dearer, aye, and clearer, to the tried human heart than any light. Gracefulness and tender feeling are the characteristics of the author rather than power, but that is no reason why such lays as his should lack a welcome. He himself answers the question of 'Wherefore more verses?' when already poetry overwhelms us like the wondrous growths of some hot climate—'the foliage rife of smothering summers faint with musk and thyme'—and in a very satisfactory manner.

There is no waste. Let the eternal gold
From genius' mint be scattered myriadfold:
Never a star was launched but its fine rays
Took some small shade of darkness from the night;
The stream that sings unseen among the ferns
Bears welcome increase to the ocean's might;
Even the minutest flower the sense discerns
Enriches all the breaths of summer days.

Here follows an experience of loss such as a juvenile poet could scarcely have met with, and in attempting to describe which, he would have been pretty sure to have overstepped the modesty of nature. There is here, however, no storm of despair, but only the calm sympathy of a feeling man for a friend's irreparable grief. The rhythm has the ease and grace of Tennyson, the master of that school of which our author is at least one of the head-boys, the pupil-teachers. It is called *Passed Away*.

Peace dwells at last with poor Elizabeth,
Wife of my trusted friend. The end has come.
There is no tremulous voice to call him home;
And yet he goes, and sits alone with death,
Though useless now his tender ministries.
There is no fretting at his absence now;
Yet sits he by her side, and sadly tries
To gather soothing from her tranquil brow
And stony bosom without pulse or breath.

The fevered watching has been all in vain;
The struggle now has ended in defeat:
Yet in her aspect is a rest so sweet
That were she waked she might again complain.
O who could wish to wring her human heart
With one pang more? But past is every fear:
Stilled by the mystery that would not start
Although a cannon thundered at her ear—
Although her little infant cried with pain.

Ah me! that one so beautiful should die!
Full on her widowed husband ere she went,
Like light within a shattered tenement,
Lingered the last love-lustre of her eye.
On the vague threshold of the unseen life
She paused; then feebly from her finger took
The golden circlet of the mortal wife,
Placed it on his, with re-assuring look,
And wedded him to immortality.

Our next extract is also a picture which could scarcely have been drawn by very youthful fingers. How lifelike, how every-day lifelike it is! How few of us but number among our acquaintances at least one such as its original!

ALONE.

So Reginald is still a bachelor—
Not young, yet youthful—studious of his ease—
His only thought how best himself to please.
Of richest wines he has an endless store:
These are his pride, and oft as lovingly
As they were children he will tell their age.
His city house, his mansion by the sea,
Alternately his jovial hours engage.
So great his wealth it hourly groweth more.

A little luck, a little keen address,
A little kindly help in time of need,
A little industry and touch of greed,
Have made his life a singular success;
And he asks homage for his splendid gains,
Paying the flattery in meats and drinks!
Applauding friends he daily entertains,
To ease him of himself. Sometimes he thinks
If he were poor his friends might love him less.

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* *Lays of Middle Age.* By James Hedderwick. Macmillan, Cambridge and London.

Gray-headed Reginald! he has royal parts,
And in all circles fills an honoured seat.
Yet vain for him are maidens' accents sweet:
At wedded slavery and henpecked hearts
He jeers and laughs; though, when the nights are cold,
The tables empty, and he feels alone,
A memory breaks of purer joys of old;
And, selfish to the last, he thinks of one
Who might have soothed him with her gentle arts!

There is a certain pity lingering about these verses which would give a cynical mind the notion that a woman had written them; but it is only that touch of feminine feeling with which all poets—except those of theology and war—are dowered. Among the Miscellaneous Poems at the end of the volume there is one called *Home Trial*, very full of this, and more affecting even than that famous one written upon the same subject—the death of a child—by Dr Moir. It is indeed as a poet of human experience, as the graceful chronicler of events which occur after the meridian of life is passed, as the photographist of humanity, taking his stand-point on the summit of that hill—to borrow a metaphor from our author himself—whose sunny side Youth is climbing, and whose shadowy side Age is descending, that we are mainly concerned with Mr Hedderwick. He describes no passions, no aspirations, no despairs. His themes are such as these. A young man who has sought a warmer clime to cure him of an incurable consumption, and who writes home the most hopeful letters, each one more confident than the last—until one comes in the handwriting of a stranger, and tells the end, which every one, but the victim himself, knew beforehand must needs be. Again, a painter, with a starving family, portraying very brilliantly on canvas *A Dream of Paradise*, the only sunshine in his poor bare room; the adverse criticism written by the unthinking scribe, which damns it; and all the misery of insufficient talent and a mistaken profession.

Things like these, common enough, too common, the poet treats of—all more or less familiar in reality with those who have gone any distance upon Life's populous road—but enriched in the telling with a certain patient pathos and not uncheerful philosophy. The last poem, upon *Middle Age* itself, is as thoughtful, complete, and appropriate as can well be.

Fair time of calm resolve—of sober thought!
Quiet half-way hostelry on life's long road,
In which to rest and re-adjust our load!
High table-land, to which we have been brought
By stumbling steps of ill-directed toil!
Season when not to achieve is to despair!
Last field for us of a full fruitful soil!
Only spring-tide our freighted aims to bear
Onward to all our yearning dreams have sought!

How art thou changed! Once to our youthful eyes
Thin silvering locks and thought's imprinted lines,
Of sloping age gave weird and wintry signs;
But now these trophies ours, we recognise
Only a voice faint-rippling to its shore,
And a weak tottering step as marks of eld.
None are so far but some are on before:
Thus still at distance is the goal beheld,
And to improve the way is truly wise.

Farewell, ye blossomed hedges! and the deep
Thick green of Summer on the matted bough!
The languid Autumn mellows round us now:
Yet fancy may its vernal beauties keep,
Like holly leaves for a December wreath.
To take this gift of life with trusting hands,
And star with heavenly hopes the night of death,
Is all that poor humanity demands
To lull its meaner fears in easy sleep.

We believe that some lines in those three last quoted verses would not have disgraced the name of any poet of this century.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

The very mild temperature of our January, contrasting so favourably with the 36 degrees below zero of New York, and the summary of the weather for 1858, are the themes among meteorologists. No one objects to a winter with primroses in bloom; nor is there much dissatisfaction expressed at the verification of the proverb, 'If the ice bears a man before Christmas, it won't bear a goose afterwards;' and how it bore during the 'cold snap' of November last, many a one will remember. In the same month there was the usual periodical passage of atmospheric waves; one of these waves had a breadth of 500 miles, and a length of 120 degrees, and was traceable at the same time all across the Atlantic.

Some discussion, initiated by the Society of Arts, is going on as to the question of another Great Exhibition in 1861. The general impression appears to be, that once in a lifetime is quite enough for such an undertaking as that. Then, as if one non-dividend-paying Crystal Palace were not sufficient, certain sanguine projectors want to build another on the north side of London, at Muswell Hill. To us, speaking as outsiders, there does not appear to be any real call for a second pleasure-house of glass; and we can hardly think it will be realised, notwithstanding the offer of twenty acres on which to build hospitals for decayed savans, littérateurs, artists, and the like. 'Vous avez,' said M. T. Silvestre in his recent address to the Society of Arts—'vous avez, à la fois, l'invention positive, qui dompte la nature, et l'aspiration idéale qui élève la vie.' If this be true, the best way is not to waste such good qualities in useless labour. And as for the 'aspiration idéale,' it certainly has not presided at the end of St Paul's Churchyard, where a block of warehouses is now to encumber the way, and hide the best view of the cathedral.

Mr Gassiot's paper on certain electrical phenomena observed in vacuums, read before the Royal Society, is an important addition to the subject, of which, as we mentioned at the time, the first instalment was delivered last year. That there is a stratification of the electric discharge is more and more demonstrable: if a vertical tube through which a current is passing be made to rotate rapidly, the divisions of the strata appear as continuous lines. The effect of vapours of different kinds introduced into the vacuum, is shewn by a different colour while the current passes—red, orange, white, &c.; and a series may be established which in the same discharge gratifies the eye by its variety, and the mind by new vistas of discovery. Magnetism has a marked effect. If, while the glass tube shines brightly with the discharge travelling through it, a horse-shoe magnet is placed against it, the character of the striæ is altered, or they disappear; and if two magnets are held in a given position, the discharge is completely arrested. Apart from their beauty, there is something especially suggestive in Mr Gassiot's experiments. Mr Grove, lecturing on the same subject, shewed that in a perfect vacuum there can be no discharge: there must be, it seems, some vehicle for the electricity to travel by. This is well shewn by a small quantity of potash placed at one end of the vacuum tube. At first, the operator may make contact as much as he pleases; no result appears; but as soon as, by placing a spirit-lamp under the potash, it is made to throw off a little vapour, then the electricity, seizing on the invisible molecules, makes itself apparent in a bright quivering light. Seeing that electricity will not pass an absolute vacuum, Mr Grove throws out the question, whether it may be the same with light? This question, as will be seen on reflection, bears significantly on cosmical phenomena. In former experiments, Mr Grove has proved that if one of the plates of a nitric acid cell be exposed suddenly to sunlight, while the other is kept dark, there is an immediate deflection of the galvanometer needle amounting to ten degrees; the light plate being positive to the dark one, as zinc is to copper. Reversal of the plates produces the same result: the dark one will be the negative. In Mr Grove's opinion, this is due to the chemical, and not to the calorific rays of the sun. An effect similar in kind is observable if both plates are in the light, but one simply shading the other. This is considered to be one of the phenomena by which we are to be aided in arriving at a conclusion as to the real nature of light; and we need hardly say that the experiments require most delicate manipulation.—Nièpce St Victor, pursuing his researches, finds that light will retain its action for six months; that is, you may seal up sunshine in a tube in July, and in December take a photograph therewith; but only one, for a single impression exhausts it. Again, if garden-mould be taken from a depth beneath the surface, and carried into a dark room, no photographic result is produced; but if it be mould from the surface, on which the sun has been shining, then the sensitive paper becomes darkened. Here we see a striking instance of the energy of light; still active though shut out from the sun; and while science and art may find rich promise therein, we think that facts will be elicited exhibiting yet more clearly than at present the important function of light upon health.

Another paper, read before the Royal Society, by Professor Rankine of Glasgow, discusses the mathematics of a question interesting to engineers—the thermodynamics of steam-engines, and the application of dry saturated steam to practice. It is a step towards power and economy. A steamer of fourteen hundred tons, built by the Rennies, and fitted with apparatus for superheating a portion of the steam, when heard of recently from the Cape of Good Hope had performed well, and with a saving of 30 per cent. of coal. The chief difficulty at present is to find a lubricant that will not evaporate with the high temperature required—300 degrees. Meanwhile, we hear a whisper of a discovery of a motive-power as much superior to steam, as steam was to wind and horses.

Professor Wartmann of Geneva has sent a communication to the Royal Society, making known the result of a series of experiments which he made to ascertain the effect of pressure on the electric telegraph. The trials were made with a coated copper wire, which could be subjected at pleasure to a pressure of 400 atmospheres—equal to a depth of 12,000 feet in the ocean—and the conclusion is, that the greater the pressure the less the conductibility.—M. Hipp, at the last meeting of the Helvetic Society, demonstrated the advantage of induced over ordinary currents in electro-telegraphy, their action being so much more immediate, admitting of a rapid delivery of messages; a fact which has long been known, and turned to account by the best telegraphists in this country.—To those interested in terrestrial magnetism, there is something important in the phenomena of currents as revealed by the Atlantic cable; there was a manifestation of magnetic storms, strongest between 10 A. M. and 10 P. M.

The Swiss naturalists are earnestly discussing the subject of the swarms of locusts which ravaged the valley of the Rhône in the Lower Valais last summer; swarms so numerous that they were hours passing a given spot, and hid the sun as a cloud. The inhabitants of the district are in dread lest the coming spring should hatch the eggs which now fill the ground all over many leagues; and systematic operations to dig them out, and to watch for and destroy the larvæ, are recommended as the only means of preventing a worse visitation next summer. In one of the locust seasons which sometimes afflict the south of France, the authorities of Marseille paid 20,000 francs to destroyers of the pest, at the rate of twopence halfpenny a pound for eggs and locusts.

Success still attends the cultivators of the sorgho —Chinese sugar-cane—in France. The plant yields excellent sugar; a farina obtained from the seed makes good bread and chocolate; alcohol and an agreeable tonic wine are extracted from the stem and leaves, as well as certain dyes, of tints hitherto supposed to be peculiar to China; and the residue is convertible into paper. Truly, a most useful plant. We are glad to hear that it has been introduced into Australia, where, in the seasons of drought to which the colonies are liable, it is found eminently useful as food for cattle.

The French horticultural journals contain notices of certain new plants recently introduced into France. One is from South America, the *Poinciana gilliesii*, a handsome flowering shrub belonging to the leguminosæ; and is a pleasing variety from the two East Indian species which have long been known. Another is the *Phlomis leonurus*, a superb flowering plant, which blows in autumn. As some of our readers will remember, the Jerusalem sage is a variety of *Phlomis*. —From the same quarter we hear of an important discovery in the treatment of grape-vines: it is, to take a narrow ring of bark from the inner end of each branch. It is to be a ring all round the branch, and as deep as the liber; and the effect is, to check the formation of leaf—mere green stuff—and to accelerate the growth and ripening of the grapes by at least a fortnight. Specimens shewn at an Exhibition in Paris demonstrated that in grapes taken from the same vine, those produced by the ringed branches were considerably larger than those from the branches which had not undergone the operation. —Something remarkable is reported of the aloe: a gardener near Paris one day scalded both his feet; he was quite alone; no one within call, and compelled thus to shift for himself, he plucked a large aloe-leaf, split it in two, and applied the raw surfaces to his feet. Much to his surprise, the pain at once ceased, and the leaf became of a violet colour; while the next day no traces of the scald remained except a dark-blue stain. This curative property has been lately verified at the Museum at Paris, in a similar complete cure of a workman, whose whole back had been blistered by a rush of steam: and by Lemaire, professor of botany at Ghent, who cured the scalded arm of a cook in the same way. The aloe in question is the *Soccotrine*—that is, a native of Socotra, which, if desired, may be grown as an ornamental indoor plant, having a good leaf and flower. It is believed, however, that the aloe of the Cape of Good Hope would be equally efficacious.—We find in the *Bulletin* of the Natural History Society of Lausanne, a notice of a single plant of rye, self-sown in a vineyard near Villeneuve, which produced 2248 grains.—And we may call attention here to the prize offered through the Society of Arts for the best paper on sea-weeds: competitors are required to discuss the subject of marine algæ, with regard to their utility as food and medicine, and for industrial purposes. We can tell them of a use to which one of the weeds—that known as *alva marina*—has been applied at Brest—namely, as wads for small-arms and cannon. The weed is washed and dried to prevent the absorption of damp, and it has the advantage of being elastic and incombustible.

We hear from Manchester that Mr Schunck, while seeking indigo blue in buckwheat, discovered something else—that is, a primrose yellow colouring matter in considerable quantity. It appears to be identical with *Rutine*, the yellow colouring matter found in rue, in capers, and in holly—the latter known to chemists as *Ilixanthine*. It is in the leaves that the yellow is met with; hence, while the seed of buckwheat is useful for food, the remainder of the plant will now become available for dyers.—Dr Angus Smith, investigating the colouring matters derivable from coal, shews that the rosolic acid which dyes silk or cotton a brilliant rose-colour, and from which great hopes were entertained by the manufacturers, is so liable to decomposition by the carbonic acid of the atmosphere, that it loses all its brilliance, and becomes of a dirty resin brown.—Examining into the causes that deteriorate the air of towns, Dr Smith concludes that the impossibility of detecting ozone in the atmosphere of Manchester, is a sufficient proof that the air undergoes an alteration prejudicial to health.

An attempt, described as successful, has been made by M. Donny to burn the coarse oily products obtained from coal; and he accomplishes the object by a lamp of peculiar construction, in which the oil is vaporised at the critical moment, and so neatly fed with oxygen, that combustion takes place without smoke. M. Donny does not recommend his lamp for dwelling-houses, but for factories, railway-stations, and public places, in which, as is said, it would give a better light than gas, at half the cost.

The manufacture of artificial ivory from scraps and saw-dust of real ivory and crushed bones may now be numbered among those gratifying instances of waste things turned to profit, characteristic of modern science. The material is reduced to a paste, and treated with gums and alcoholic solutions, when necessary; in some cases, white-lead is added, and thus a fine bright artificial ivory is produced, suitable for tablets, panels, carvings, pianoforte keys, billiard balls, and many other purposes.

An opportunity of seeing with our own eyes a number of star-fishes preserved in glycerine, enables us to verify all that has been said concerning the value and importance of that remarkable fluid to naturalists. In alcohol, as many a collector knows to his sorrow, the colours of the specimens fade or alter; but glycerine preserves them as in life, and with all the parts flexible. One of the specimens above referred to was the *Luidia fragilissima*, so easy of fracture that a perfect example took rank of necessity with rarities; but in the glycerine it is entire as in its native element. We may add, that if star-fishes or thin objects are preserved in circular glass boxes, made after the manner of a snuff-box, they can then be seen and examined on both sides.

A paper by Mr T. Sterry Hunt, of the geological commission of Canada, read to the Geological Society, deserves notice on account of the light it throws 'On some Points in Chemical Geology.' The author shews that plutonic rocks, so called, may have originated by metamorphism and displacement of sediments, without calling in aid the ejections of a central fire.—The last sheet of the geological map of the Netherlands, published by the government at the Hague, contains a noteworthy addition: the large area once covered by the Haarlem lake; farms, well-tilled fields and gardens, where but a few years ago there rolled miles of water.—The Swiss government has published a map in twenty-five sheets of the confederated cantons; concerning which Professor Studer remarked at a scientific meeting, that while politicians are using it for their purposes, savans must bestir themselves until the whole surface shall be covered with the conventional colours which depict the botany and geology of the country. It is regarded as a triumph by geologists that the strata brought to light by the tunnel now boring through the Jura, agree exactly with the theoretic plan prepared a few years since.—The minister of Public Works at Paris has organised a new survey of France, establishing the levels in all the departments, whereby water-courses may be regulated, drainage-works improved, and inland navigation facilitated. The surveying staff of the army has been called on to furnish copies of all the ground in relief.

Among isthmian projects, the cutting through of the Malayan peninsula is talked of: if accomplished, it would save nearly 2000 miles in the voyage from Calcutta to China.—The Austrian frigate *Novara*, touching at Ceylon on her voyage round the world, sent thirty-two boxes to the museum at Vienna, containing the specimens already collected in zoology, botany, and mineralogy.—The voyage of circumnavigation made in 1851–53 by the Swedish frigate *Eugénie*, is now in course of publication by the Academy of Sciences at Stockholm, at the cost of the Swedish government, and ere long the scientific observations and the narrative will be available in handsome quarto volumes.—Captain Pullen, who with the *Cyclops* has been sounding the Red Sea, in preparation for a telegraph cable, is now to survey the coast of Arabia, for the shore-route.—News from Eastern Africa reports that Captains Burton and Speke, after penetrating the interior to the great lake Ugiji, and visiting an important dépôt of Arab trade, were on their way back to Zanzibar. We may hope to get the particulars in a few weeks from the Geographical Society.—New York is about to commemorate Dr Kane, the adventurous arctic explorer, by a public monument; and Barbadoes has held an Industrial Exhibition, which was pronounced 'very successful.' If the island would get up an exhibition of Industrious Planters, and shew that honour as well as profit is to be got by wise co-operation with lavish nature in the cultivation of the soil, we should hear no more weak complaints of distress in the West Indies.

LILIES.

Upon the bosom of the lake
The dreaming lilies lie;
Low breathing winds above them wake;
Green leaves around them sigh;
Wild birds soar, singing from the brake,
Into the cloudless summer sky—
Still on the water's tranquil breast
The lilies float and gleam at rest.

By day the sun's unclouded light
Falls from the skies so still and deep;
In silence through the summer night
The stars on their high marches sweep,
Beholding in their lonely flight
The lilies o'er the waters sleep,
Still waving under sun and stars,
Through moving shades of weeded bars.

The distant plashing of an oar,
The murmur of the boatman's song,
Is wafted from the distant shore,
Where wave the willows green and long.
No other sounds the flowers sweep o'er,
That whitely gleam dark leaves among,
And as the tranquil waters flow,
For ever ripple to and fro.

H. B.

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ON THE MARCH.

It is one o'clock in the morning; and after panting and tossing through four hours of restlessness, we are about to sink into a state as nearly resembling sleep as can be arrived at in a July's night in Bengal, when our rest is broken by the shrill sounds of the first bugle. There is a melancholy pleasure in putting off evil till the last moment, in the illusion that, by so doing, we may avert the scourge—perhaps for ever. The condemned felon, as he ascends the scaffold, lingers on the threshold of his fate, and the hope of the coming reprieve stays his step as he marches to indubitable doom. It is thus with us whose rest is disturbed by the voice of that shrill monitor, and we still linger abed with a half-wakeful feeling that we ought not to be there, and yet with an overpowering sense of somnolence and recklessness; but just as slumber is stealing over us again—like a cloak, as Sancho says—hark! the second bugle; and up we jump with a painful consciousness of being too late: hurry on our clothes with the rapidity of lightning; and after gulping down a cup of abomination, composed of equal proportions of cold water and hot milk, ignite a cheroot, and emerge into open air. It would be quite dark if it was not for the starlight, brilliant enough to make darkness visible, and no more. If there had been sufficient light to distinguish objects, the scene would have been singular in the extreme; but as it is, the hum of voices, and the active stir of preparation, alone makes us conscious of the busy life without. As the sense of vision becomes more accustomed to the gloom, we are enabled to discern objects, though dimly and imperfectly. Indistinct forms of soldiers hurry to and fro, seeking, in the dark, for their arms and accoutrements, and addressing each other by the euphonious appellations of Dick and Bill; horses neigh vigorously, and salute each other with their heels, to the imminent risk of the bystander. The ebon forms of *khitmutgars* and *bearers* glance through the nebulous gloom, their white turbans and snowy drapery standing out sharply in relief. Camp-followers, like swarms of locusts, muster thickly around, busily engaged in packing up traps, loading camels, and exchanging compliments with each other in language more copious than select. Suddenly, the moon, struggling through a cloud, shews her cold pale face upon the scene, which, in a moment, undergoes a sudden change, quick as a dissolving-view. The tents are in a state of collapse; down they come; and the camp, but lately studded with white canvas, regularly laid out, disappears as completely as if it had been engulfed into the bowels of the earth. Standing amid the débris of our prostrate dwellings, we note the scene around, where confusion worse confounded meets the eye at every turn. Camels are to be descried sprawling on the ground, uttering piteous groans, as rolls of canvas, camel trunks, *pitarahs* (tin-boxes), tent-poles, are thrown upon their backs; stretching their long necks from their misshapen bodies—like turtles looking out of their shells—and rolling their small lustreless eyes with a mournful expression of appealing sympathy. Elephants with their Brobdignagian forms, huge unwieldy heads, weak watery eyes, and ample feet, are trumpeting to each other, and throwing their long trunks into the air in fantastic curls. Further from the camp are the horses of the *sowars* (native troopers), picketed in parallel lines to each other, stamping the ground with their hoofs, and filling the air with their shrill outcries. Of every colour of the rainbow, the brutes present a motley spectacle to the eye—

White, gray, and chestnut, yellow, black, and blue.

But, hark! what sound is that, making night hideous, and striking the ear as if all the fiends of lower air were engaged in one discordant jubilee? Is it Discord herself come to strike up a tintamarre? If you cast your eye to the left, you will perceive the cause. The *hackaries* (native carts) are beginning to leave camp, and as these vehicles are unprovided with springs—their wooden wheels revolving upon wooden axles—hence the shrieking and groaning of these lugubrious machines. One by one, with the tardy pace of a funeral-carriage, they drop out of camp, the *garriwan* (cart-driver) accelerating the pace of his inert bullock by the ingenious method of twisting the tail of that sluggish animal. And now all is ready, and the troops muster for the march. You mount your horse, and, supposing you are attached to the advance-guard, ride slowly out of camp, followed by a swarm of dusky sowars, their horses plunging, and rearing, and neighing, standing erect on their hind-legs, and using other playful gambols in the endeavour to unseat their riders. Your first essay is to thread the most questionable ground in search of the main road, before reaching which, you will most probably find yourself landed at the bottom of a nullah, or will have to run the gantlet of a net-work of land-cracks, which form one of the attractions of this debatable land. Once fairly on the march, the column winds its tardy and snake-like course through a country flat as a pancake, dotted here and there with clumps of trees, now silvered by the moonbeams, now cast into shade with the alternations of light and shadow. The light and graceful tamarind; the banyan, with its pendulous branches and expanding shade; the mango, with its green and luxuriant foliage; the fragile palm, and the waving plantain, add a pleasing diversity to the landscape. Villages of irregular shape, with their long narrow streets, dingy houses, yelping curs, squalling brats, mean shops, where are displayed, in the street, grain, fruit, and sweetmeats—the latter presenting a singularly dark and uninviting appearance—are scattered thickly about. Sometimes a Hindoo temple shoots up, white and solitary, into the sky, of picturesque, but by no means handsome exterior, through the half-open door of which you may catch a glimpse of the fantastic deities within—huge misshapen monsters, with red lips and goggle eyes, boasting arms by the dozen, and gazing comfortably around, though encumbered with an addition to the original cranium of a couple of heads.

As the troops advance, we have time to note their appearance. Behind the rear-guard is seen the cavalry; the English trooper, with his pale, and too often sickly countenance; the sowar, with his *karkee* tunic, long boots, waving locks, untouched by the comb, variegated saddle, easy seat on horseback, with his knees up to his eyes, body swaying wildly about, eyes flashing forth uncurbed passions, and love of plunder. Behind them, again, the infantry and artillery, who can only be distinguished by clouds of dust, out of which occasionally emerges a dusty, fagged, jaded individual, with a musket in his hand, unshaven, unwashed, his uniform hanging loosely upon him; very different from the smart, active, well-dressed private, as he appeared on the regimental parade before the barracks at home. In the rear extend for miles long lines of hackaries (carts), elephants, camels, and all the paraphernalia of Indian warfare. Rolling long clouds of dust into upper air, the motley cavalcade creeps slowly along, like the tail of a comet attached to its nucleus, the small clump of glittering bayonets in front. And through all this scene of heat, noise, shouting, and dust, sits the cart-driver, as undisturbed as patience herself, perched on the front of his groaning, tortured vehicle, white, actually white with accumulated dust, streaming with perspiration, and yet with a look of philosophical resignation that might have struck envy into the heart of a stoic.

Nine o'clock! and the sun pours down his rays with all the fervour of an Indian summer. The men begin to flag, and drop to the rear by the half-dozen; beasts begin to fail; the elephant even, undulating his huge carcass from side to side, like a three-decker in a gale of wind, shews symptoms of exhaustion. The effects of the half-hour's halt at daylight are fast wearing away. But we have not long to wait now; the camp is at hand; and at length the column, no longer martial and erect, but with its crest daggled and drooping, wheels slowly in beneath a grove or 'tope' of trees, which is the resting-place for the day. The men are dismissed, and break off into groups, produce short pipes, and devote themselves to the great plant. Officers, hastily unbuckling their swords, throw themselves on the ground, and endeavour to snatch a few minutes' repose. By degrees, and at long intervals, the baggage drops in. Now all is confusion and bustle again; unloading of animals, gabbling of domestics, shouts, orders, the buzz of voices; sowars riding wildly about at the gallop, their hair streaming in the wind, their turbans, in disorder, fluttering like streamers behind their heads—their sharp-cut, savage features gleaming with excitement; Sikhs, with their handsome faces, long hair, like a woman's, gathered in a knot on the top of their heads, athletic forms, and bold independent air, lounge slowly past, or salute each other in unknown tongues. Now the camp is marked out, and the position of each duly allotted. Up go the white tents, and, 'as from the stroke of an enchanter's wand,' a city of canvas, regularly laid out, whitens the surface of the earth. Pickets are thrown out, the Europeans repair to their tents, silence is restored, and only a few stragglers linger on the scene, but lately alive with noise and uproar. Look at those two groups, the antithesis of each other; let us approach and examine them more closely. There are half-a-dozen European soldiers inside a *pal* (small tent), all in dishabille, some reclining at full length on the ground, others standing in an easy attitude, smoking with the quiet dignity of Britons. They are all the true type of the John Bull—large limbed, broad chested, full faced, with a Bœotian look of stolid dulness. A *darogah* (police-officer) approaches this group with hesitating steps and timid mien. He is dressed in white, with a brilliant shawl wrapped round his loins, his head enveloped in a turban of motley hue, beneath which shines his dark, mahogany countenance, regular features, white teeth, jet-black beard, and eyes glistening like those of the basilisk, with an expression of cunning rather than ferocity. A gigantic sword glitters on his thigh, sheathless and trenchant, and in his belt are two formidable-looking horse-pistols, manufactured in the year one, and only meant for show. *Pigamas* (drawers) of a pink colour hang in folds about his ankles, and his feet are encased in shoes, or rather slippers, of rich red, curling upwards in a point at the toes. With a graceful salam, he addresses himself to the nearest of the soldiers, a short, squab individual, with a countenance suggestive of animal food and ardent spirits.

'Colonel Sahib hagir hi?' (Is the colonel present?)

Now, it is a remarkable fact, that, although not understanding one syllable of the native tongue, the British soldier will always attempt a conversation in the dialect of the east.

Soldier. (With much gesticulation, and a vain attempt to catch the accent.) Hah, Colonel, Sahib—tent—there. D'ye twig, blackie?

The dusky darogah smiles blandly. 'Ap ungreegee bolta!' (You are speaking English!)

Soldier. (loquiter.) I say, Bill, there's this ere cove a-wanting some grease to bolt with. Bolta indeed! That's what ye be a-wanting. Bolt, you black rascal ye, or I'll scoop your eyes out of your ugly head.

Bill (In a voice inarticulate from tobacco smoke.) Knock the (expletive) nigger over the pate, and (expletive) let him wait there till I come and pick him up.

The darogah, in spite of his warlike appearance, looks uneasy, and slinks away from the dangerous vicinity.—Group number two consists of several camp-followers, mild Hindoos, clad, or rather disapparelled, in dingy *kumarbunds* (waistbands), busily employed in preparing their morning meal. The first care is to seek for wood, which is done in the twinkling of an eye, blackie collecting it in some mysterious manner from the grass around. This done, the *ottah* (a species of flour) is produced, from which he quickly manufactures a thin flat cake which goes by the name of *jipati;* this is placed on a brass plate, and laid on the fire, and his culinary preparations are complete. When ready, this cake, to which a little rice is sometimes added, forms his simple meal, which he devours with the gusto of an epicure, lingering over it as if he could have enjoyed the pleasure for ever. Then comes the dessert, the *hubble-bubble* (small hookah), and he is at the acme of enjoyment. The water bubbles in the cocoa-nut, and his soul is in the seventh heaven. The Sikh is denied this enjoyment, smoking being prohibited among the disciples of Govind; but he makes up for it in other ways, swallowing down enormous quantities of ardent spirits and intoxicating drugs. By and by, a young officer in her Majesty's service emerges from a neighbouring tent in the primitive costume of his ancestors, the ancient Britons, when in dishabille. He has a big stick in one hand, and a pair of boots in the other, and, by his flushed countenance and furious air, has evidently worked himself up to a high pitch of mental and physical excitement.

Officer. Here you bearer, nigger, rascal, *quee hee.*

Conscious of the coming storm, the dusky domestic has intrenched himself behind an adjacent tent-rope, and shews no decided inclination to be won over by these endearments.

' *Officer.* (In unmistakable English, and elevating his voice.) And you did not clean my boots, you scoundrel! Clean boots, thus—(imitating with his hands the act of polishing shoes). Well, you infernal reprobate, knave, what do you say to this—' Hum ?'—Boot? Devil take their lingo. Will you answer, you scamp?

Blackie's reply is somewhat irrelevant:

'Hum gureeb admi kodabund.' (I am a poor man, my lord.)

His lordship, not in any way softened by the rejoinder, overflows with wrath, and makes a frantic rush at the object of his ire, pinions him with one hand, while, with the other, he administers repeated applications of the ratan.

'You blackguard (whack), not to clean my boots. Never been accustomed in all my life. Just like them (whack). What can you expect from a black-face! Take that, and that, and that.' (Whack, whack, whack.)

His lordship forgets that he is not at his club in London, and that the (expletive) nigger has walked fifteen miles, and has not yet tasted food; but why wonder that such trifling matters should have escaped his recollection?

Twelve o'clock! the earth is like an oven; the sun pierces through the canvas walls of the tents, and strikes hot and fiery upon the occupants within. We gasp for breath, and wander savagely about in drawers, in the vain endeavour to find a cool spot somewhere. And now the summons to breakfast, and we sit down to table (our khitmutgar standing behind our chair with his hands meekly folded before him), and go through the form of a meal—no more. That over, comes the tranquillising pipe. After inhaling a sufficient quantum of tobacco, we make a desperate attempt at sleeping, but the heat is too great to enable us to woo the sweets of Morpheus.

Thus passes the day till the shades of evening fall, when we emerge from our suffocating dens, and inhale the evening breezes. Dinner in the open air, 'with what appetite we may,' concludes the day, and we retire to rest, with the pleasing anticipation of being disturbed at the same hour on the morrow.

This sketch depicts an ordinary march in India, but, of course, when in presence of the enemy, it is considerably more arduous and harassing.

'FOOLS RUSH IN WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD.'

And sometimes with great advantage too. Angels we take to be timid, considerate beings, venerative of difficulties, sensitive as to improprieties, modest about their own pretensions to a right of opinion or of action; hence extremely apt to keep back and do nothing, where they ought to go on, and might do a great deal. If, while the angel stands hesitating, and letting the opportunity glide past, the fool, with a happy insensibility to hazards, rushes in, and does what is wanted, even though he has outraged common sense and prudence a little, is he not on the whole to be commended? I cannot see the least ground for any but an affirmative answer.

It would be curious to inquire how many great victories folly has achieved where angelic wisdom would most probably have failed. A considerable number of Suwarrow's would have to be ranked in this category—some of our own Nelson's too—some also of Charles James Napier's. It is told that, when a brilliant exploit of an eccentric officer of George II.'s time was praised at court, it was remarked, in objection: 'Oh, but the man's mad!' when the king remarked: 'I wish he would bite some of my generals.' The other men were men of square and rule, who obeyed orders, and never either made any great mistake, or achieved any great success. This one, greatly daring, performed what was to them a kind of miracle. Fools of that kind are really useful occasionally. There was a general conviction, all through the war with Russia, that something of the sort was much needed just then. The means adopted in the Baltic, in particular, were thought to be decidedly too angelic. Cronstadt was a nut which cool judgment never could crack—but folly might. Doubtless, we should be much more impressed with the potentialities of Folly for good in military affairs, if it were not that, when she has done a clever thing, we are so apt to set it down as a piece of wisdom—just as

> Treason is ne'er successful—what 's the reason?
> 'Cause when successful, none dare call it treason.

It is past telling how much credit she loses in this way.

Could we learn the whole of the successes achieved by Folly, history would have to be re-written. Not only would there be great conquests to transfer to her account—heretofore deemed the fruit of profound calculation and foresight—but we should probably have to credit her with not a few of those great state changes by which the interests of mankind are believed to have been most chiefly advanced. Let us whisper it with very great humbleness; but even in religion it might be shewn that we have occasionally owed a debt to Folly, where high reasoning and the utmost devotion to principle might have failed. It was, alas! the folly, not the wisdom of Henry VIII., which gave England the Reformation. Little more than ten years ago, there was a great European state lying in an anomalous condition for want of a head. A fool, or at least a person who had hitherto passed as such, rushed in, and made a throne for himself, where, to all appearance, scarcely any other kind of person would have succeeded. His success inclines us to reverse old opinions, but—wait the end.

In civil and ordinary affairs, we are continually seeing great things done by Folly, where angels would have hesitated to interfere. The celebrated legal case of —— was universally looked on as hopeless. The shrewd people shook their heads, and did nothing. The benevolent were interested, but dreaded to come forward. In these circumstances, it was taken up by Tomkins, whom all men repute a fool, and, through infinite difficulties, it was carried to a successful conclusion. The —— Bank, now paying 10 per cent. on the capital, was not started by any of the sagacious men who have since conducted it, but by that empty-headed fellow Durden, who, when the first directors came to be chosen, was (to his own great astonishment) excluded from the list, under a general sense of his utter inability to speak a sentence of common sense or to hold his tongue. That newspaper, of such transcendent popularity, and such success as a speculation, was commenced by no able editor, no high-class politician or statesman, but by simple Jones, whom no one would intrust with the writing of a paragraph where any judgment was required, and whose whole mental powers would have previously been thought dearly purchased at a hundred a year. The subscription for the great —— Testimonial was commenced by no man of eminent sagacity or well-attained influence. People of that sort would have thought it a ridiculous fancy, impossible of realisation. It originated with one happily under no control of modesty, or fear of trouble, or of failure, and who 'went at' difficulties merely because he had not the sense to see them. And so on of a hundred actual things, established for the use and gratification of us mortals, or which we are glad to have seen done. Here, too, Folly is often deprived of her just credit, merely because we are so apt to associate wisdom with success—because, in short, the effect glorifies the cause.

We must, however, discriminate. If we carefully trace the history of Folly, we shall find that her great successes are confined to *coups de main*, revolutions, desperate ventures, dangerous projects, commencements of new religious sects, and so forth. She is great at a sudden start or a beginning. It must be once and away with her. For the carrying on of anything, we must discharge her like the bank-originator above alluded to, and take to the guardianship of cool judgment and discretion.

We can put her under no rule; all calculation she defies. Philosophy cannot assist her. She must be left to force her own way, if she can. When she has accomplished her wondrous results, and set us all a-gazing, we may, as soon as we gather our senses, examine the way she took, the means she employed, and think we see how she flabbergasted her opponents, how she secured the plaudits of the populace, how it all came about. But, as her course is not that of wisdom, and must be audaciously original on each new occasion, it is evident that wisdom can take no cognizance of it beforehand, or ever teach good sense even to similate it. The triumphs of Folly, therefore, must be regarded as only grand exceptive cases, very interesting to witness, but barren of instruction for the guidance of either angels or men.

TELEGRAPHIC PROGRESS—OVER-HOUSE WIRES.

It may safely be predicted that the electro-telegraphic system will yet be rendered available for many useful purposes, at present hardly thought of. The powers of this marvellous agent, cannot fail of further development. Time and space, two of the great difficulties which man is always attempting to conquer, are brought under control by electric means, to a greater extent than by any other natural agent available for practical use; and it will be our own fault if we do not apply still further the bounteous gift placed at our disposal. Leaving all the greater operations of electro-telegraphy (of which the readers of the *Journal* have been kept pretty well informed) untouched in the present article, let us just notice one or two matters connected with the local distribution of intelligence or signals in any one city or town.

These minor applications of electric power may be classed into *time-balls*, *electric clocks*, and *local telegraphs*.

A time-ball, such as that which Professor Airy caused to be constructed at Greenwich, is not merely a clock of wonderful accuracy; it is practically a monster clock, whose indications are visible from a very great distance. True, it tells its tale only once a day, and is used chiefly as a regulator of clocks and watches, chronometers and time-pieces elsewhere; but at this particular hour, its accuracy transcends that of all ordinary clocks; while its indications are visible from a distance far greater even than those of the clock at the New Houses of Parliament. The Greenwich time-ball is so generally known, that a few words of description will suffice. On the top of the observatory is a large, hollow, coloured ball, which slides up and down a pole passing through its centre. Mechanical apparatus effects all the usual movements of the ball; but electrical contrivances cause the sudden descent of the ball exactly at one o'clock every day. The astronomical clock belonging to the observatory, one of the most perfect ever constructed, gives a click or movement to a particular piece of mechanism, at that particular moment; and the movement is communicated through an electric wire to the ball, or rather to a lever which retains the ball in its place; this lever being affected, the ball falls through a distance of many feet. Now, the movement of a spherical body, standing out in bold projection against the sky, can be seen from a very considerable distance. Captains of ships passing down the Thames, can see the descent of this ball (if at one o'clock in the day), and can regulate their chronometers by this signal.

When once the usefulness of the Greenwich time-ball became apparent, an extension of the same system was naturally to be expected. The Electric Telegraph Company erected a time-ball on the summit of their establishment in the Strand. At the very instant when the Greenwich time-ball falls, an electric current is sent through a wire from the observatory to the Strand—which wire passes under roads and streets, and over the Thames; the time of transmission is shorter than human means can measure; for all practical purposes, the two balls descend at the same instant, although the source of power is close to the one, and several miles distant from the other. An example of great public spirit was given by a London tradesman, as a means of serving his neighbours. Mr French, the chronometer-maker of Cornhill, erected a time-ball at the top of his premises. The ball is visible from many parts of the river, for it stands at a height of a hundred and fifty feet above the mean water-level; and it can also easily be seen from many of the streets in the city. The ball is made of zinc, and is five feet and a half in diameter. In Edinburgh, on the top of Nelson's Monument, and in Glasgow, on the tower of the Sailors' Home, there are time-balls under precisely similar arrangements, for the use of the shipping in those ports. There is another belonging to the Admiralty at Deal; and one at Liverpool belonging to the Electric Telegraph Company; and we may reasonably anticipate that most of our great sea-ports will, one by one, avail themselves of this admirable contrivance; for the expense is a mere trifle compared with the amount of service rendered. Of course, so far as the principle is concerned, the ball might be made to fall at any other hour instead of one o'clock, or might do so on many different hours of the day—this is a mere matter of practical convenience.

Concerning *electric clocks*, many persons imagine that there is electrical mechanism within each clock, which 'goes' independently of all other clocks; such, however, is not the case. An electrical clock is little more than a skeleton; its interior mechanism is small in quantity, and not very complex. The face (illuminated at night), the figures on the face, and the hands that travel round from figure to figure, are the chief components. There is a central clock (say at Greenwich) which gives the right time, and electric wires convey impulses from this clock to the electric clocks, wherever and how many soever they may be; there is mechanism which causes this impulse to be given to the hands. Theoretically, the number of clocks thus set going from one centre might be almost unlimited; it is simply a question of practical convenience. In front of the Electric Telegraph

Company's Office in the Strand is an electric clock for the use of the public; while within that and other offices of the same company, clocks of analogous action are very numerous. Most of the railway companies have facilities for correcting their station-clocks by electric agency. Time signals are sent hour by hour from Greenwich, and are transmitted through the Electric Company's wires to various stations and towns in the United Kingdom—an achievement truly wonderful, were it not that we have almost ceased to wonder at such things.

Let us now proceed to the subject of *local telegraphs*—those which do not travel to great distances.

It needs hardly a word of explanation to shew that a copper-wire, connected with the proper electric apparatus, might convey a signal from room to room, as well as from city to city. Some of the monster hotels of America have already adopted the system; and it is, we believe, adopted in the Houses of Parliament, to ring all the bells in the several committee rooms at four o'clock, to denote that 'the speaker is at prayers,' and that the committees must close their labours for the day. Few manufacturing establishments are large enough to render such a contrivance necessary; seeing that a gutta-percha speaking-tube suffices; yet there are breweries which cover several acres each, and a few other large establishments fitted to profit by an electric telegraph. One London firm, however, Messrs Waterlow, have adopted the system under a singular form. They have formed a *house-top* telegraph between two factories situated in different parts of the metropolis. Having obtained permission so to do, they arranged their posts on certain house-tops, stretched their wires high up across the streets, and established the requisite galvanic or magnetic batteries at the two terminal stations. Of course, in an arrangement of this kind, nothing can be done except with the consent—either by kindness or by purchase—of the owners of the houses thus so singularly over-topped.

The 'over-house' telegraph system has been adopted in Paris, Brussels, and New York, for local purposes; and the success of those attempts, coupled with that of Messrs Waterlow, has suggested the establishment of a company for applying the system on a very large scale in the metropolis. Without offering any opinion on the speculation, in a Stock Exchange point of view, we may briefly notice it in its topographical and mechanical features.

The proposal embraces, in the first instance, the means of electric communication between any place, within a radius of four miles from Charing Cross: an extension of the radius being easily practicable afterwards, if success should attend the opening enterprise. Within this circle of four miles' radius or eight miles' diameter, the metropolis has been hypothetically divided into eleven districts, each containing, on an average. nine stations, or about a hundred stations in all. The stations are so selected as to locality, that the delivery of a message may be made within a few minutes after its receipt. In a map, lithographed to illustrate the intentions of the projectors, about a hundred stations are marked down. One, a great central station, is near that great centre of the world's commerce—the Bank of England; ten others are district stations, each the principal station in a particular district; while all the rest are local stations, subordinate to the chief ones in the respective districts. The eleven central and district stations are, respectively, near the Bank, at Mile End Gate, at Kingsland Gate, at the Angel at Islington, at the junction of the Highgate and Hampstead Roads in Camden Town, at the junction of the New Road with Edgeware Road, at Charing Cross, at the north end of Sloane Street, at the Elephant and Castle, at Camberwell Green, and at Greenwich. All of these, except the last named, are within the four-mile radius. All the local stations are to be connected with the chief stations of the same districts; and all the district stations are to be directly connected by the nearest practicable routes; but wires will only be laid down from one minor station to another, according as they form parts of a main route. Thus, taking the map for our guidance, we find no wire marked out direct from Highbury to Kingsland; in order to save expense, the current of electricity will be sent by a circuitous route along wires extending from both of these outposts, and meeting in the city; but as the 'lightning messenger' recks not of distance, it is of little consequence whether the circuit be a mile or two more or less. Thus, again, there is nothing from Kilburn to Camden Town, except round by the New Road and Seymour Street; nothing from Bayswater to Kensington, except *viâ* Charing Cross; in short, it is a topographical problem, how to connect one hundred stations in the metropolis by the shortest length of wire.

Wherever practicable, it is proposed that the wires should be stretched up aloft on the 'over-house' method. This would be preferred, on the score of cheapness in the erection, of facility in the repairs of injuries, and of the avoidance of interruption to public streets by any underground arrangements. To what extent, however, such a plan would be practicably avoidable, is one of many problems which would have to be solved. Two or three existing companies have telegraphic wires underlying the streets of the metropolis; and these might, possibly, under amicable arrangements, be made in part available for the local telegraph.

Now, as to the kinds and varieties of purposes for which this metropolitan net-work would be serviceable. The scheme of the projectors may possibly not be altogether reliable, as to the sources and amount of profit; but it will, at any rate, serve to indicate the views entertained as to the requirements of the public. The one hundred stations, and the many scores of miles of wire would, it is estimated, contribute to the following end:—To convey government messages, military and civil, in connection with all public offices; to summon witnesses in the country to the law-courts in London, and to facilitate the proceedings of barristers and solicitors in relation to those courts; to convey messages and announcements pertaining to the important events of births, marriages, and deaths, of which there are no fewer than 160,000 annually in the metropolis; to summon medical practitioners at times and places where there is pressing need; to give notice to the several fire-brigade stations of the breaking out of a fire; to aid the police authorities in the various matters where promptness in police duties is important; to announce departure from, or arrival at, any of the metropolitan railway stations, on the thousand-and-one commercial and domestic matters which now so much affect men in this travelling age; to ascertain, before making a visit of business or pleasure, whether the person to be visited is 'at home;' to make or postpone appointments for meeting; to maintain communications between the business-houses and the suburban residences of 'city men;' to arrange with the existing telegraph companies for the collection of such of their messages as start from different parts of London, and for the delivery of such as are directed to London, in such manner that the general and the local telegraphs may mutually assist each other; to provide wires and instruments, which may extend from any one of the company's stations to any establishment belonging to government-offices, police-offices, fire-brigade stations, carriers, manufacturers, wholesale dealers, wharfingers, dock and canal companies, railway companies, bankers, hotel-keepers, &c.; such wires to be used solely by and for the particular establishment paying for the accommodation.

The commercial question, as one of profit and loss, we have already decided not to notice here. We stop not to inquire whether they could send 10,000 messages a day from the central office alone? whether they could fit up all the stations, and provide all the wires and apparatus, for so low a sum as L.35,000? whether we might or might not reasonably expect that one person in each family would use the telegraph, on an average, once in three months? whether the three million of souls in the metropolis would, even at this low average, bring L.40,000 per annum to the company's coffers? whether the system would open a field for useful woman's work, as telegraphic clerks at the various stations?—these are questions to be decided on their own merits, by persons best fitted to estimate them; but we cannot hesitate to express a conviction that a system of local or street telegraphs, whether 'over-house' or otherwise, are among the things which we are destined to see ere long. But *cheapness* will be an indispensable feature of the plan, to insure success; the penny-post has spoiled us for any forms of transmission—whether of persons, messages, letters, or commodities—which involve the high charges of former days.

THE LATE EMPEROR SOULOUQUE.

The official journal of France informed the world not long ago that the Council of the order of the Legion of Honour had, after due deliberation, resolved that the order of St Faustin, founded by the Emperor of Hayti, should take its place among the decorations which French subjects would be permitted to wear; and as the honour of bearing this decoration might eventually be extended to English subjects also, we thought that the future knights of St Faustin among our readers would perhaps thank us for an introduction to the illustrious individual to whom the calendar of saints is indebted for a new name, and the College of Heralds for a new order. And thus, ignorant of the future, we wrote.

Like a humble river, whose waters have for years flowed smoothly on between level banks, but suddenly swelled by a thousand rills, grows into terrific magnitude, and spreads desolation around; so the fortunes of Faustin I. have sprung from a humble source, and have only been swelled into their imposing proportions by circumstances, in a great measure independent of his will. In 1804, his imperial majesty was servant to a certain mulatto general Lamarre, and was distinguished as a great, burly, good-humoured negro, as ignorant of letters as of state affairs; in 1847 he was elected president of the republic of Hayti. Between these two dates extends, not a series of great deeds, but a dead level of social and political insignificance. However, the position of president once attained, it is to his own exertions that Faustin owes a throne. Between 1847 and 1849 he established in the blood of his fellow-citizens his right to an imperial crown.

To understand the history of this emperor, we must go a little back in the history of his empire, which has most likely been forgotten by many amid more stirring events nearer home; although there is much to interest us in an empire formed of self-emancipated negro slaves, who, during the last fifty years, have alternately been proclaiming democratic republics 'in the presence of the Supreme Being,' and monarchs 'by the grace of God;' which has a titled nobility and a rigid court etiquette, but in which duchesses and marchionesses sell tobacco, soap, and spirits by the pennyworth; which has deliberative chambers and a daily press, but in which the monarch is but just learning to spell; where the Roman Catholic faith is the recognised religion of the state, and professed by the whole people with few exceptions, but in which the dominant class worships fetiches and dances magic-dances.

Circumstances connected with the struggle for freedom, towards the close of the last century, in the French colony of St Domingo, as well as the difference of culture existing between the negroes and the mulattoes, laid the germs of animosity, from the first, between these two divisions of the coloured population of the island, and it broke out into open dissensions as soon as the whites had been expelled; although article 14 of the constitution proclaimed by Dessalines declared 'that as all distinctions of colour between children of the same family, whose father is the head of the state, must necessarily cease, the Haytians shall henceforward bear the exclusive generic denomination of Blacks,' no fusion of hearts followed this decreed fusion of colour; and the history of the island is but a record of a series of changes and revolutions brought about by the continued dissensions between black and yellow, now ending in a yellow republic, now in a black monarchy; to one of which Faustin owes his elevation to a throne.

In 1810 General Lamarre fell while defending Le Môle, for the mulatto party, against Christophe, then Haytian general, formerly waiter at a tavern, and subsequently king. Faustin Soulouque, by that time promoted to be his master's aid-de-camp, is said to have been charged by him to carry his heart to Pétion, who reigned as dictator over a republic in the south of the island, in which the half-castes predominated, while Christophe, a black, ruled the north with a royal sceptre. Pétion appointed Faustin Soulouque to a lieutenancy in his mounted body-guard; and at his death in 1818, bequeathed him to his successor, Boyer, as part of the goods and chattels of the presidency. Boyer attached him to the service of a certain Mademoiselle Joute, who had likewise been bequeathed to him by Pétion, and who employed Soulouque as superintendent of a spirit manufacture.

In 1847, Soulouque found himself commander of President Riché's guard; and upon the sudden death of that potentate, the votes of the senate, as well as the parties in the state, were equally divided between two candidates. Eight successive ballots having proved that neither of the parties would yield to solve the difficulty, the president of the senate—in which body the constitution vested the right of election—proposed a third candidate, who, for the simple reason that he was unknown to all, was unanimously elected; and thus, to his own surprise, as well as that of the rest of the world, Faustin Soulouque suddenly found himself chief of the republic of Hayti.

The new president, a man about sixty or sixty-two, but looking not above forty, was remarkable for his timidity, but timidity of a peculiar kind. He had an unconquerable fear of magic and of ridicule; and to this weakness must be attributed the bloodshed through which he has waded from the presidential chair to the imperial throne. Each of the presidents who succeeded Boyer and preceded Soulouque, had either died prematurely, or been deposed, before attaining the first anniversary of their election, and Soulouque's immediate predecessor, Riché, had even died on the very eve of this anniversary. These were suspicious circumstances, and quite sufficient to awaken the fears of the believers in Vandoux, among whom the new president was conspicuous. Vandoux is an African god, whose worship was transplanted to St Domingo by the negroes imported as slaves, and who reveals himself in the form of a snake, which, being shut up in a box for the purpose, communicates a knowledge of hidden things to his worshippers through the medium of a high priest and priestess, called respectively *papa-loi* and *mama-loi*, and who, in virtue of their connection with the snake, possess great magic powers. The worshippers of Vandoux among the former slaves of St Domingo—and the same is said to be the case among its present free inhabitants—formed a secret society, admission to which was preceded by a most solemn oath, delivered under circumstances the most terrific that the African imagination could invent. Sometimes a cup of goat's blood, still warm with the life of the animal from which it had been extracted, was quaffed in confirmation of the oath taken to suffer and to inflict death rather than to allow the mysteries of the society to transpire; sometimes the blood of an ox was substituted, and mixed with *tafia*, the spirits manufactured in the country, to give more zest to the ceremony.

Now, Soulouque had taken it into his head that some spell, worked by the help of Vandoux, had been the cause of the premature conclusion of the presidential career of his three predecessors, and that he would likewise come within its power by occupying the same palace and the same seat in the senate. However, Madame Soulouque having consulted on the subject a *mama-loi*, holding a distinguished position among the sorceresses of Port-au-Prince, was informed that no danger was attached to a seat in the presidential chair, but that the magic—for magic there was—was wrought by means of a doll, which had been buried by Boyer in the presidential garden, previous to his leaving the island; and that not until this magnificent doll had been restored to the light of day, would the spell be broken that doomed the career of each successive president to be cut short before the expiration of a twelvemonth after his election. Somewhat relieved by the tangible form thus given to his enemy, Soulouque immediately ordered search to be made in the garden, and also ordered counter-incantations to be performed by a certain Frère Joseph, whose history is so curious as to merit a digression.

During the disturbances which took place in the interval between the resignation of Boyer and the election of Soulouque, a negro, by name Acaan, clad in nature's simplest garb, with the exception of a linen cloth round his loins, a straw hat on his head, and a pair of huge spurs on his naked heels, repaired one day to the market-cross in his native village, and there publicly made a vow not to change his toilet until the 'orders of divine Providence had been carried out;' these orders being, as he explained to the crowd gathered around, that 'the poor black people' should expel all mulattoes, and divide their property. His auditors seem not to have been quite as far advanced as he in communistic doctrines, for a murmur ran through the assembly, and all eyes turned towards some poor, ragged mulattoes, who formed part of the assembly. 'Oh, those,' exclaimed Acaan, with ready wit, 'those are negroes!' and another black man, serving in a *tafia* manufacture in the neighbourhood, stepping forward, confirmed and extended the dictum in the following words: 'Acaan is right, for the Virgin has said (in negro French)—*Négue riche qui connaît li et écri, cila mulâte; mulâte pauve, qui pas connaît li ni écri, cila négue.*' (A rich negro, who knows how to read and write, is a mulatto; a poor mulatto, who neither knows how to read or to write, is a negro). This black, whose name was Joseph, subsequently attached himself as military chaplain to Acaan's army, a band of half-naked savages, who went about the country pillaging, murdering, and burning, according to the principle laid down by him, and over whom he exercised considerable influence by means of his Vandoux incantations, which he varied at times with hymns to the Virgin, in order to suit all tastes. Clad in a white shirt and white trousers, and with a white handkerchief tied round his head, Frère Joseph, as he was now called, might always be found urging the true distinction between negro and mulatto on his hearers, whenever sympathy of race inclined them to clemency towards a rich black; but when Acaan, after a career of indescribable atrocity, amid which he had proclaimed himself the 'protector of suffering innocence,' and the champion of 'the *eventuality* of education,' despairing of the gratitude of his fellow-men, blew out his brains with a pistol, Frère Joseph gave up his roving life, and devoting himself exclusively to witchcraft, settled in Port-au-Prince, where, as in some capitals nearer home, it seems that a tolerable living can be made by it.

Such was the man from whom Soulouque sought aid in his campaign against the buried doll and its malignant influences; but while these measures were going on, rumours of the state of superstitious terror in which the president was held got abroad; and he became the laughing-stock of the enlightened class of the community, who thus revenged upon him their own folly in having elected for their chief a man who could neither read nor write, and whom his nationality, under those circumstances, naturally laid open to such influences. Soulouque winced at the laughter; but the greater fear conquered the less, and the excavations in the garden continued; while on the other hand the president endeavoured, by the most assiduous attention to affairs, to deprecate the ridicule of the scoffers. Unfortunately, however, in spite of ministerial discretion, anecdotes illustrative of the gross ignorance and strange mistakes of the chief of the state began to circulate, and the laughter redoubled. This was unfair and unjust. Soulouque had attained his position by no intrigues of his own, but by the unanimous voice of the elective body; and if some of his early acts had betrayed the superstitious negro, others had given evidence of his sincere desire to do his duty. Again Soulouque winced, and now changed his tactics. An assumption of self-confident knowledge succeeded to his former naïve betrayal of ignorance. Dispatches and documents submitted to him were taken proudly from the hand of the minister or other official, perused with an air of profound attention, and then laid by, to be read and interpreted in secret by some confidant, possessing the art of letters. But hatred and distrust of the class who ridiculed him, while he was so anxious to propitiate their esteem, began to rankle in Soulouque's heart, and he drew nearer and nearer to the *ultra*-black party, who alone seemed to sympathise with him, and with whom he might speak pure creole without fear of being criticised. *Peuple Noir*, as they called themselves, who had so long been in slender favour in the highest quarters, were not slow to avail themselves of their good-fortune, and every morning some sable gossip brought to the palace some new joke or witticism, circulating at the president's expense, and which in his judgment confirmed the suspicions he had began to entertain, that the whole of the mulatto and moderate black party were accomplices in the affair of the buried doll. Gradually, also, it became customary for a band of blacks, comprising the individuals most conspicuous for their antipathy to the mulatto race, to assemble round the palace gates on Sundays, and when the president returned from parade, to address him after the following primitive fashion: 'President, *peuple noir* desires that all men of colour shall in future be excluded from public offices;' and Soulouque, who, thanks to Vandoux exorcisms, had by this time got over the thirteenth month of his tenure of office, and who, thanks to repeated violations of the constitution and other acts of oppression which had remained unresented, had also got rid of his fear of mulatto superiority—Soulouque graciously granted the request. Another day, 'black people' required that the red colour, the emblem of the half-castes, should be expunged from the national standard; then demanded the re-establishment of the constitution of 1816, which will transform the elective presidency into a dictatorship for life, the dismissal of the cabinet, and the substitution of simple secretaries for the responsible ministers. Soulouque, in whom the savage African nature had by this time conquered all the gentler instincts, was equally ready to cede to these demands, but prudently deferred their execution until a scene very similar to that of the slaughter of the janizaries by Sultan Mahmoud, should have struck such terror into the opposition as to prevent all resistance.

In accordance with this plan, on the 16th of April 1848, three cannon-shots from the palace gave the usual signal that the country was in danger. As prescribed by law, the country population, from fifteen miles around, began at once to crowd to the capital, while the inhabitants rushed armed into the streets; and generals, senators, deputies, and other functionaries hastened to the palace to inquire the cause of the alarm, and to ask for orders. Successive volleys of musketry, followed by shrieks of anguish, re-echoed through the town, soon gave the answer. Within the closed gates of the palace-yard, and even in the very corridors of the palace, the mulatto functionaries of all grades, who had crowded thither, were being deliberately murdered by the president's body-guard, assisted by the president himself, as a preliminary to the introduction of the constitution of 1816. Soon the work of slaughter spread from the palace to the streets. For three days the carnage continued, accompanied by pillage and incendiarism, the panic-stricken mulattoes offering no resistance, but flying to the foreign consulates, and on board the foreign ships of war, for protection. At length the consul of France, dwelling on the effect that would be produced on public opinion in Europe, succeeded in wresting a so-called amnesty from Soulouque, whose vanity, in spite of his barbarous acts, still craved for the approbation of the civilised world. But on receipt of the dreadful news from the capital, a mulatto insurrection at once broke out in the south. The president repaired thither. Denunciations, wholesale murders, confiscations, and illegalities of every degree of violence ensued. During six months, the island was deluged in blood; and not until the groans of the survivors had been stifled by terror, did Soulouque return to his capital through triumphal arches inscribed with the most enthusiastic welcomes. When he deigned to look at these, and express a word of approval, the enthusiasm of *peuple noir*, at the supposed fact that 'president had learned to read,' rose beyond all bounds. Every day the speeches emanating from the Haytian senate and chamber of deputies, from which every man of character had been eliminated, and recorded by the *Haytian Moniteur*, became more fulsomely adulatory, until, on the 25th of August 1849, in accordance with a petition presented by the people, and acceded to by the chambers, a troop of senators on horseback proceeded to the presidential palace, and imposed upon the head of President Faustin Soulouque, whose 'inexpressible benefactions' had 'consolidated the institutions' of the country, a crown of gilded pasteboard, in virtue of which he was in future to bear the title and to enjoy the immunities of Emperor of Hayti. His majesty Faustin I. responded to the senatorial speech by an enthusiastic '*Vive la liberté, vive l'égalité;*' and then, accompanied by a numerous *cortège*, and greeted by the acclamations of the people, he proceeded, amid salvos of artillery, to the church, where a *Te Deum* was performed, with such music as the chapel imperial could command, trumpets, clarions, and drums making up in noise what was wanting in harmony. But the new emperor was not a man to rest satisfied with a pasteboard crown, however richly it might be gilded, nor with coronation by universal suffrage. Faithful worshipper of Vandoux though he was, his greatest ambition was to be numbered among Christian monarchs, and in consequence, negotiations with the court of Rome were at once commenced to obtain the nomination of an ecclesiastic of sufficiently exalted rank to perform the ceremony of the coronation; for, strange to say, though Hayti had had an emperor and a king, and had now again given itself an emperor, a bishop it had never had since the expulsion of the white population. Up to the time wherein we are writing, the clergy in Hayti, with a few honourable exceptions, have been represented by a set of runaway French, Italian, and Spanish priests, or adventurers, who in many cases have never received ordination, who lead lives of scandalous immorality, and who live in brotherly harmony with the practisers of Vandoux magic. Christophe, it is said, on assuming the royal title, applied to the pope for a bishop, but never received an answer; while, during Boyer's presidency, negotiations were opened for the establishment of a concordat, but were broken off again because the papal court demanded greater independence for the clergy than the Haytian government was disposed to grant. Faustin's attempts to secure a real bishop to perform the ceremony of his coronation proved equally abortive, his negotiator having, by some misconduct, given umbrage at Rome. However, this individual, who enjoyed the title of chief-almoner to the emperor, chose to conceal his failure, and to return to his country with the self-bestowed title of Bishop of Hayti; and thus the coronation was duly celebrated on the 18th of April 1852, and was not a whit the less brilliant for being rather spurious.

Thus far had we written in the full assurance that Emperor Soulouque had still his 'right divine to govern wrong.' But now (Feb. 2) we receive news that the creator of the Duc de Limonade and the Marquis de Marmalade will bestow his titles upon the salt of the earth no longer. Soulouque is dethroned. The Haytian Republic is once more established, and General Fabre Geffrard, its president, and only 'nearly a black man,' reigneth in our Black Emperor's stead.

OUR COUSIN ALICE.

I HAD certainly not recovered from the effects of the severe wounds received in the battles fought between Cawnpore and Lucknow, when I met again, after four years of separation, my cousin Alice. My brain must have been less steady than usual; and it was perhaps a little turned by my being regarded as the hero of the little world, formed by the county families and early friends, who met to congratulate me on my return to England from the seat of war in the east. I ought to have had a mother to nurse me, but I had none. I was an orphan. Yet it was to the house which, in my father's lifetime, had been my home that I came back.

There was the great down, wooded nearly to the summit, which I remembered so well, where the coursing meetings used to be held. I could scarcely believe, as I entered the drawing-room before dinner, that the same party which had so often assembled for the great gatherings on Marley Down, were not drawn to the place now for the same purpose. But other customs prevailed. My young cousin, Sir Reginald Moore, was no sportsman. The sleek greyhounds had all disappeared; I missed them sorely. The old squire—my grandfather—had been dead more than a twelvemonth. His youngest and favourite son—my own parent—had gone before him to the grave. Our present host, the representative of the family, was a fair, pensive-looking youth of five-and-twenty, fond of poetry, accomplished, handsome, but with scarcely nerve enough to fire off a gun.

Our fair cousin, Alice Verschoyle, had always been a subject for contention between us. We had been jealous of her smiles in boyhood; as men, we were still more covetous of her favour. Through all the Crimean battles, and 'neath the burning Indian sun, in the perilous march with Havelock, and while I lay prostrated by illness after that fierce time of conflict was past, I had worn her picture next my heart. The case had turned away a ball that would else have pierced it.

There had been no avowed betrothal between us when we parted, but her fair form was pressed unresistingly in my arms, and she wept her long farewell on my shoulder. It was true that she called herself my sister in the letters she wrote to me, but I never acknowledged the relationship. Nothing but poverty stood between us then; and now, I had risen in my profession. If I found her still in the same humour, and willing to share the vicissitudes of a soldier's lot, I meant to make her my bride. As I looked at her across the table—for we were not seated near each other—and saw a deep blush mount to her face beneath my ardent gaze, I believed that she would not refuse my petition.

Perhaps she thought me vain, for every one was calling upon me to tell the tale of our Indian battles. She did not look at me; her eyes were quite averted: but other women were weeping as I spoke of the noble patience of those heroic ladies, whose names will live in history for their gallant endurance of suffering at Lucknow. I had seen those pale victims, some widowed, some orphans, all most deeply tried by the privations and anxieties of those long months of waiting, before the heavy boom of the guns told them that our brave English soldiery were advancing to their rescue.

Can I ever forget that midnight evacuation! The dread silence, the long lines of troops, the awful intervals, where all our care could not prevent danger, through which those half-fainting women and their brave but exhausted defenders had to pass. Thank Heaven! all went well—that no accident, no untimely panic marred the plans of our gallant chief. Our triumph would have been scant if one of that heroic band had perished on their way to freedom!

Reginald had written some verses on the subject, which Alice had set to music. I had not seen a tear in her bright eyes previously, but they coursed each other down her cheeks as she sang my young cousin's words. I do not remember what they were, but I thought them scarcely worthy of the subject, and certainly undeserving of the precious drops they called forth.

A window was open near me, and I was out upon the terrace before the song was ended. It was dark; and a couple of persons who were seated on one of the benches set against the wall, were talking earnestly, and did not perceive me. I heard a lady's voice say:

'When her mourning for her grandfather is laid aside, Miss Verschoyle will marry her cousin. Sir Reginald has one of the finest estates in this county. It will be an excellent match for her, and has been long contemplated by the family.'

It was, nevertheless, the first time such a thought had entered my mind, and I was one of Alice's nearest relatives—too near, some persons might consider, for us to think of marrying; but, if it were so, the same objection applied to Reginald: we were all first-cousins to each other.

At that moment, there was a stir in the drawing-room: a lady had fainted. I saw her borne out, and the fair head with its long sweeping curls of golden brown, which had once rested so confidingly on my shoulder, was now supported by another arm. It was Alice and Reginald. I did not stay to look at them; one word from his lips reached me. I saw the look of intense agony on his fair face, so like her own, as he bent over the insensible girl. In one moment, I knew that he loved her. I could not wait to see her eyes open. I had stood fire many times, but I had not courage to face the conviction that first glance of reviving consciousness might bring to me, that the passion I read in the dreaming boy's eyes and voice was returned.

I believe I was half mad when I rushed away. I had travelled night and day to meet her; as I have said, I had not recovered from the effects of the injury I had sustained during the street-fighting at Lucknow; when, in addition to severe wounds, the beam of a falling house had descended on my head, completely stunning me; and but for the gallantry of my comrades, I should have been left for dead, at the mercy of our savage foes—and now I had seen her in the arms of another. I had heard her lips repeat his musical words; nay, I had seen her very senses forsake her under the spell of emotions raised by what appeared to me to be paltry common-place lines. As I stood in the large hall where we had all three played as children, to which, as a man, I had so often pictured my return, the bitterest mortification took possession of my soul. For the first time, I remembered how inferior was my social position to that of my cousin. I, a mere soldier of fortune, who must return to a burning climate, and a country on which henceforward women will look with dread and aversion; while all around me, bathed in moonlight, from the high windows of that noble hall, hung with trophies of the chase and the banners of our ancestors, I saw the wide domain which belonged to the young baronet. Those were his deer trooping under the trees. The magnificent cedars grouped in the midst of the dewy lawn, the spreading elms and beeches, the majestic oaks—all belonged to that beardless boy. What were a few years of manhood, a few daring deeds which had won for me the rewards which a soldier covets—the medals and crosses at which she had scarcely glanced—compared to his advantages!

As I went up the stairs, each step awoke painful recollections. We had come down them together on the morning when I left home to rejoin my regiment, then just ordered on active service. Here, at the landing, we paused long, while she gave me her picture, and, after some hesitation, the chain of golden hair that still supported it. Had it been woven for me? Alice would not confess, but she did not deny the fact. I always believed that it was so.

As I stood looking down into the lighted hall, two persons came into it together. Alice seemed well, and scarcely to need the support of Reginald's arm, on which she was leaning. I heard him say:

'Is it so, Alice? Have you quite decided? Will you never repent, and wish to draw back from the words you have spoken to-night?'

He took her hand and looked in her fair face with mournful tenderness. I did not wait to hear her answer. I could not control myself sufficiently to move away quietly. As I looked down upon them for the last time, I saw that Alice had started from her companion, and was gazing upward; I even fancied that she called me, but I did not return or answer her. Better for all of us would it have been if I had heeded that sweet warning-voice.

I rushed to my room at once, and for hours I walked up and down, passion swelling within me like the surging sea. Then for a short time my mood changed, my suspicions seemed unfounded. I recalled Alice's joy at seeing me again; the soft broken words of delight she had uttered when I came upon her by surprise in the park; our long pleasant walk together, so full of old recollections and present confidences. If no plighted vows had been exchanged, it was because we both had long known that we were pledged to each other. The words I had heard on the terrace now seemed to me idle gossip, mere nonsense. The morning would bring her again before me, bright, beautiful, and truthful as ever. For an instant, the demon of jealousy stood rebuked; but again and again he returned, maddening my already fevered brain and overworked frame, till every nerve quivered with excitement.

The same images haunted me when, at last, I lay down, exhausted by fatigue, but deeming it impossible to sleep, just as a dull gray haze spread over the landscape, obscuring the moonlight which was soon to give place to the dawn. The last thing that I remember was the swaying of the fir-tops, as the old trees opposite to my open window rocked to the blast.

When I woke, it was broad daylight. The sun was shining in, tempered by silken hangings, that waved in the fresh breeze. A part of each of the shutters was closed, and the room, considering that the morning was so brilliantly fine out of doors, was somehow shaded and darkened. I very faintly recollected the train of ideas which had so tortured me ere I lay down, but an impatient feeling, such as might visit a sufferer from long sickness or a prisoner, assailed me. I tried to start up from my couch, but a strange feeling of weakness, like what I had experienced when I was first wounded, came over me, and I fell back again.

As I moved, a woman-servant stepped forward quickly, and in gentle, measured tones, spoke to me. I did not understand a word of what she said; a mist came before my eyes, her voice rang indistinctly in my ears, a horrible, sickening dread came over me—images of horror seemed to fill the room, and I fainted. When I revived, my mind was clear; the spectral forms which had flashed across my vision became distinct, and I recognised them as shapes in a dream. I felt that I was ill and weak, and as I, the once strong man, lay prostrate, incapable of moving, I thanked my God for the helplessness which it might be had saved me from such guilt as in the visions of the night had been mine.

I do not know whether at that moment any one was watching by me. The person or persons in the room, if it were so, must have been very quiet, for not a sound disturbed me as I recalled the images which had been present with me in that fevered dream. The room I was in was one that I knew well, and outside the window ran a narrow ledge of ornamental stone-work, which went along the entire front of that old house. It was barely wide enough to step upon, yet I fancied that I had walked the whole length of it in safety, till in my dream I came to my cousin Reginald's room. He was now the master of the house, and slept in what had once been my grandfather's apartment. When I was a boy, the kind old man had had an illness, during which my mother nursed him; and the severest reprimand I ever received from her was when one of the servants told her that Master Hubert had got upon the stone ledge outside his window, and tried to walk round to one that opened into the chamber where she was sitting up with the invalid. My father said then that it was a thing impossible to be done, but in my dream I fancied that I had achieved it.

My cousin was a painter as well as a poet, and the room in which I imagined him lying was full of indications of his tastes, which were all gentle and refined. A half-finished picture stood on an easel, at which he must have been gazing before he fell asleep. It was Alice reading a letter, with a bright flush of happiness and warm love in her face. A small but beautiful statue, modelled after some old classic ideal of loveliness, but with her features, stood on a table at his elbow. He was stretched on a couch, still dressed as I had seen him, calm, but with the melancholy expression which was habitual to him. His delicate, aristocratic features and pale complexion, which looked yet whiter in the lamplight, were almost feminine in their regular beauty. I do not know what disturbed his slumbers, for all passed dreamlike in silence; but he woke, and, rising up, appeared to come forward to close the window at which I was standing. The ledge was so narrow, that it seemed to me a touch would throw me off my balance, and precipitate me many fathoms to the paved court below. The instinct of self-preservation, mingled with a strong antagonistic feeling, arose within me as my rival approached. I grasped the stanchion of the window, and sprang into the room.

Some kind of misty indistinct recollections came next of a conflict between us, in which passes were made, the statuette was thrown down, and the canvas of the picture pierced through with the sharp point of the blade enclosed in a sword-stick, which I had snatched up before leaving my room, and with which I had steadied my footsteps on the giddy ledge. I felt the excitement of battle once more, the fierce rising of blood-thirsty passion. Though no words were exchanged, we seemed to know that we were rivals, and that a death-struggle was passing between us.

How it ended, I knew not. At this point my sleep must have been interrupted, for I remembered no more of my dream, which chilled me as I recalled it. I did not mention it to any human being during my slow recovery, and few words were spoken in my presence. I had been dangerously ill for many weeks, which had passed in the delirium caused by brain fever. My wounds had reopened, and the greatest caution was necessary; above all things, the mention of any agitating topic had been prohibited.

I began to think that my jealous surmises were unfounded, when I woke up night after night and found Alice watching over me. The attendant slumbered in her chair unchidden, while my true love waited upon me. Sometimes her kind gentle mother would call her away, and say that she overtaxed her strength, but Alice would come back again at the same hour the next night.

The horrid dream which had followed my access of jealous fury returned again and again. I rejoiced that Alice's sweet face was beside my pillow when I woke from it. Nothing evil could remain near her, and the bad spirit was rebuked; but he took possession of my senses in her absence, bringing for ever before me that accursed vision.

I thought that the house seemed singularly quiet, and that my nurses were all grave, even sad, in their demeanour; but this was probably occasioned by the precariousness of my situation. Alice, in her white flowing robes, looked almost spectral; but I trusted that, with returning health, I should see her under happier auspices, and, if she grieved for me, her pale dejected face did not appear less lovely than when she smiled upon me on my return.

No rival came between us now. My sick-chamber was visited only by the physicians, and by those whose especial task it was to wait upon me. Not a breath of what was passing without reached me. I felt surprised that my cousin Reginald, for whom I was once more beginning to entertain affection, never came to see me; but pride restrained the inquiry which often rose to my lips.

Once, when I casually mentioned his name, Alice looked troubled; a deep shade crossed her fair brow; her bright eyes filled with tears.

'Do not let us speak of any one but ourselves,' she said softly. 'This is my world. It may be selfishness, but I cannot interest myself in anything that goes forward outside of these closed doors, till you are well enough to leave this chamber of sickness, and share the pains and pleasures of this changeful world with me. Think how bright everything looked when you returned from abroad, and how little we thought what a day, even an hour, might bring forth!'

I could not quarrel with her answer, though I strove to chase away the tears that followed it, and lead her thoughts to brighter prospects. When I spoke of returning with her to the east, she looked at me sadly. I thought that she doubted whether I should ever recover sufficiently to resume the duties of my profession, though I assured her that I already felt much stronger and better.

'It is not that,' she said hesitatingly; 'perhaps, Hubert, you will never need to go to India. Do not question me. I ought not to have said even this much; but there have been changes among us since you have been ill. It is so hard to dissemble with you!'

Her mother's entrance prevented the revelation that was quivering on her lips; but my curiosity was roused. The next day I rose, to try my strength, and walked to the window. Of late, the vision had not come so strongly, and I started at seeing the narrow stone ledge exactly as I had imagined it to be. I fancied myself still dreaming; and tired by this slight exertion, I crept back to my couch.

It was mid-winter; the park was deep in snow; the stream that traversed the lower part of the grounds was frozen, and long icicles hung from the eaves, before my strength was sufficiently restored for me to leave my room. Even then, my first appearance was a surprise to the family. I had not mentioned my intention; and the lights were shining warmly and cheerily as I entered the drawing-room, where the large Christmas fire was blazing, kindled with the yule-log from the last year's burning; but my feelings were chilled by seeing Alice and her mother sitting beside it dressed in deep mourning. They had never visited my sick-chamber in black, or said a word of any cause for assuming it.

Alice started up with a cry of surprise, and ran to meet me.

'What is this?' I said, laying my hand on her *crêpe* sleeve. 'Why are you in mourning?'

She threw herself into my arms and wept. My aunt, who had risen hurriedly, came towards us and drew me nearer to the sofa.

'Sit down, poor fellow! you are not strong enough to support her. Ah, Hubert, we have all had much cause for sorrow. The shock will find you unprepared; but since you are once more among us, it cannot be kept from you. My nephew, Sir Reginald Moore, your cousin, is dead! We are in mourning for him.'

I was deeply grieved; and my aunt, seeing that for the moment I could not speak, said, with a glance at Alice, whose countenance was hidden on my arm:

'Do not ask me to tell you the particulars at present. I doubt whether we could, any of us, bear to speak of them, or you to hear what has filled this house with grief. Never was there a kinder heart, a better master—so young, too—so beloved.'

Alice's sobs shook her slight frame.

Her mother paused abruptly. 'We must not speak of it,' she said decisively; 'Mr Verschoyle will tell you this sad tale to-morrow.'

I was silent at her bidding, but my mind was full of surprise and sorrow. The wild dream in which I had seemed to myself to enter Reginald's chamber recurred to my thoughts. It appeared to have been a presentiment of the coming woe; and I remembered with deep regret the unkind thoughts towards my cousin which I had entertained when I saw him—how little either of us supposed that it was for the last time.

It was quite impossible that we should, any of us, turn our thoughts from this painful subject. I did not remain in the room long; and when my uncle, seeing how greatly fatigued and depressed I appeared to be, offered me his arm, I accepted it, and went at once back to the sick-chamber, which I had quitted with such different feelings.

The old butler handed us a light as we passed through the hall, saying gravely: 'I am glad to see you able to get about, Sir Hubert.'

I staggered as he spoke. The words seemed to pierce through and through me. Strange as it may seem, it had not, in the surprise of hearing of my cousin's death, occurred to me that I was his heir. He was so much younger than myself; I had always considered that he was certain to marry, and would in all probability survive me; never had my thoughts rested on the possibility of my inheriting his rights!

My uncle saw how much I was distressed. 'Servants never miss an opportunity of addressing a person by his title,' he said bitterly. 'Even that old fellow who knew poor Reginald in his cradle! But surely, my dear Hubert, you must know that you are now the head of our family.'

'I had not thought of it,' I said, moving on with difficulty. 'I do not think that my brain has been quite steady for some time—everything seems to reel before my eyes. Come to my room; I cannot sleep till you have told me how my poor young cousin died.'

I believe that my uncle exercised great caution in what he imparted to me, but I scarcely remember what words he used. He tried very hard to dissuade me from listening, but I insisted on hearing all that was known respecting an event which was wrapped in mystery. My cousin had been found dead, with marks of violence on his person, when his valet entered his room one morning during my illness. He had suffered very much for some time from low spirits, arising from Alice's having rejected the offer of his hand which he had repeatedly made to her. She was so dreadfully affected by the idea that despair on this account had led him to put an end to his existence, that the subject was most carefully avoided in her presence. At first, it had been imagined that robbers had entered the house, which was known to contain much valuable plate and jewellery. There were some indications of this having been the case; but neither Sir Reginald's purse nor his watch, which were on the table, had been taken, and the most strenuous search and sedulous inquiries had failed in eliciting the fact of any burglars having been in the neighbourhood. Nothing had been left undone or untried, and the conclusion at which the family had arrived was a most painful one. It was thought best to let the matter drop.

I listened as though I were in a dream, but not the slightest idea that I was in any way connected with this sad and strange event occurred to me. My uncle stayed with me for some time, but I scarcely spoke to him. When he was gone, I lay down, quite exhausted with fatigue, and slept.

The agitation which I had undergone brought on a relapse, and I was confined to my room for weeks. When I recovered my senses—for during the whole time my brain was confused and weak—cheerful images surrounded me. My relatives had been advised by the physicians to lay aside their mourning, and all mention of melancholy topics was forbidden. I took my place among them once more, gradually resuming my former habits, and at length growing accustomed to the change produced in them by my being treated as the master of the house.

My engagement to Alice was now universally known and acknowledged. Her parents acquiesced in it, and no objection was made to my wish that our marriage should be speedily solemnised. Her health was shaken, and it was considered that it would be better for both of us if the tie was cemented without unnecessary delay. There was no great preparation. All passed quietly. We walked across the park to the little church in the village, which was gaily hung with flowers that the early breeze had brought into existence. Alice's coronal of white roses had been woven for her that morning with the dew upon their petals.

We were to leave home for a short time; and while my bride was bidding farewell to her mother, I went to my room to fetch down a travelling-cloak which had been my companion in many an arduous campaign. As I drew it off the hook, something fell clattering down. I stooped and picked up the sword-stick which had done me good service in the dark streets of Constantinople among the drunken Bashi-Bazouks and thieving Greeks. The sight of the weapon recalled the dream which I had had when I was first taken ill—I had forgotten it lately. Reginald's dimly lighted room, the poor, graceful youth reclining among works of art, with the pale gleam of the night-lamp shining on his handsome face. I shuddered, and was about to put aside the sword-stick, when some involuntary impulse made me try to unsheath it. The blade was rusted in the scabbard, and would not come forth. My hands trembled; I was forced to lean against the wall; when at last, with a more vigorous effort, I succeeded, and saw a dull red stain upon the blue sheen of the polished steel.

At that moment, my name was called. I threw the weapon back into the closet from which I had taken it, and hurried down. The carriage was at the door; Alice was shedding her parting tears on her mother's shoulder. The postilions were restraining with difficulty their impatient horses. Every one was crowding round us with congratulations and good wishes. I paused one moment on the threshold. Should I reveal the dark thoughts passing through my mind? After all, what were they? Mere vague surmises, based upon the airy fabric of a dream, while before me was life—real, palpable happiness. I drew Alice away from her parents, impatiently, but with tenderness, lifted her into the carriage; and the next moment, the ancestral oaks and beeches, the peaked roofs of the old hall, were fast fading from our view.

A month passed quickly with us. I think, I believe, that Alice was happy. For myself, I cannot tell; I seemed to live in a dream, less real than the accursed vision which, day and night, was present to my eyes. If I slept, I started up, imagining myself walking along that giddy ledge, steadying myself by the aid of a weapon down which blood was slowly dropping. My wife imagined that the nervous starts and tremors which often shook my frame were the remains of my long illness. All that was soothing and gentle lay in her voice and manner, yet their very sweetness tortured me when the thought was roused that I had done a deed for which my life might be the forfeit. Must I lose her?

Never was this sensation stronger than when we drove up the long avenue leading to our home. There were her parents, whom I regarded as my own now; the old servants, who had known us from infancy. Must I stand before them as a culprit—a murderer? Would any one believe that I had done this most vile deed in my sleep—unconsciously—I, who had profited so largely by my cousin's death; and yet, could the tortures of the prisoner in his condemned cell be greater than I must endure if I lived among them, bearing the weight of such a burden on my heart? Could I hide it from Alice? —from those who sat at the same table with me, and were so near me in blood?

As I crossed the threshold, even while Alice was blushingly receiving her parents' kisses and congratulations, my resolve was made, and before nightfall, put in practice. Nothing could exceed the surprise of my relatives when, after hurriedly opening the letters that awaited my return, I said that in one of them my immediate presence in London was required. There was but just time to catch the train at the next station. I took nothing with me but a change of clothes, and the sword-stick, which had lain unnoticed in the dark corner to which I had consigned it; and, declining Alice's offer to accompany me, I left her with her parents, and was soon travelling through the soft darkness of the summer night, alone—perhaps, it might be, exercising for the last time the privileges of freedom.

I did not follow the route I had marked out, but, after the first mile, I directed the coachman to turn his horses' heads, and drive me to the house of the nearest county magistrate. He was an old friend of our family, and nothing could exceed his distress when I made known my errand. In vain he argued with me that the impression on which I was acting had been formed under the influence of delirium. I shewed him the weapon with the stain of blood upon the blade, and surrendered my person into his hands, desiring that the fullest and most complete investigation might take place.

I now heard for the first time the exact particulars of the state in which Sir Reginald Moore was found when his servant entered the room the morning after his death. There could be no doubt that it had been brought about by violent means, but whether his own hand or that of a murderer had put an end to his life, had never been ascertained. Every circumstance corresponded with the images in the dream, as I had for some time imagined it to be, which had shewn me his last moments. The absence of the weapon which had caused his death fearfully corroborated the idea I had lately entertained. There had been marks, my old friend was forced to confess, of some person or persons having entered the room by the window, which was standing open, but this was contradicted by there being no footprints on the border beneath; and the impression was that Sir Reginald had himself thrown away the weapon which had inflicted that fatal wound. Search had been made for it, however, in vain.

Though my version of the story was almost incredible—in spite of the many circumstances which told against me—my countrymen believed it. My having voluntarily surrendered to take my trial, at the moment which should have been one of the happiest of my life, was regarded as a strong proof that my guilt was not premeditated. No waking man, it was decided, could have passed to and fro in safety along that dizzy ledge. I certainly could not have done it again. Then the long illness, during which my brain was affected, beginning that very night; the wounds, still unhealed, received in my country's battles, made that English jury regard it as impossible that the officer before them, with the Victoria Cross and Crimean clasps and medals on his breast, could be a cold-blooded murderer. Those twelve honest men judged me by the dictates of their own noble hearts, and, after a short consultation, unanimously acquitted me.

But I had been arraigned before a severer tribunal, which was still unsatisfied. The revengeful, passionate impulses which maddened me on that night—which turned my brain, and made me pass in sleep that fearful Rubicon which divides guilt from innocence—were still remembered, and filled me with remorse; for me, the gifts of wealth and happiness seemed too rich a boon. How could I enjoy life under the shadow of the woods that once were *his*, or revisit the scene of that dreadful deed—the property of the fine young fellow whom I had deprived of life? Better, as it seemed to me, to be separated from all I loved, and perish—as the men of my old regiment were perishing day by day—a victim to sun-stroke and disease, on the burning soil of India—than profit by the untimely death of Reginald Moore!

My preparations were made silently. I did not mention even to my wife the resolution I had formed when, after the trial was over, she pressed me to return to our home. The command of my regiment had been kept open for me till the last moment. I took my passage in the *Indus*, resolved to avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded for wiping off the stigma which, in spite of the acquittal of my countrymen, still weighed me down. It was only after I had received notice that the vessel would sail in a few days, that I told Alice I was about to leave her.

'No, Hubert,' she said, gently; 'I am a better dissembler than yourself. I have guessed your intention; a word spoken in sleep revealed it to me. I have been as busy as yourself the last few weeks, only you have not had time to notice it. I mean to accompany you to India.'

Alice was not less firm than myself, and her cause was a better one. Her parents, too, much as it grieved them to part with her, supported her arguments. How it might have been if I had been separated from her, I know not, for my mind was disturbed, my health much shattered; but her care of me during that long voyage restored me to vigour and tranquillity. When we landed at Calcutta, I was in all respects equal to the fulfilment of the duties of my profession.

We have been parted for many months now, but fortune favours me, and I look forward, at the end of the campaign, to our reunion. The morbid agonies of remorse, from which I suffered so much, no longer distract me. I feel that I am not responsible for an action committed when my senses were not under the control of reason. The stirring scenes in which I have played a not inglorious part have restrung my nerves, and invigorated my constitution. In the heat of battle, I have been unscathed; in the burning jungles and aguish swamps, I have watched and slept unharmed. This new year, it is said, will see the termination of active warfare; and, when peace is proclaimed, I shall lay down my sword, and return, with my sweet, heroic, patient wife, to England, satisfied that manly, arduous exertion, and the remembrance of that providential care which guarded the soldier in the battle, will enable me to struggle with the phantoms which at one time threatened to haunt our pleasant home.

As I look across the devastated fields, black and bare as if swarms of locusts had passed over them—as the smoke mounts to the lurid sky of burning villages, set on fire by accident or design, in the wake of the army, despite the stern edicts of our gallant commander-in-chief, and the vigilance of the provost-marshal—England, with its smiling, peaceful homes, rises before me. I see the old house under Marley Down smiling a welcome to me; and I hear, instead of the shrill réveille and the dropping shots, the cheerful cawing of the rooks in the elm-trees, and the bark of the old squire's harriers, as the pack bursts from the kennel.

UP IN THE CLOUDS.

Was it not so great a man as Dr Franklin who once compared balloons to babies; as being of no use at present, but likely to become of use in all due time? At all events, such has been my own feeling upon the matter, and what I feel is (to myself, at least) of equal consequence with what Dr Franklin felt.

This opinion concerning the practicability of traversing the 'viewless fields of air,' is not, I confess, founded on any deep scientific knowledge, and far less upon practical experiment. I never myself constructed any dove, as Archytas did, to fly with artificial pinions, although I have often seen it done in the theatres since his time. I never cast myself from any precipitous height in the faith of elaborate wings, as the Abbot of Tungland was enthusiastic enough to do at Stirling Castle, to please King James IV. I leave such famous feats—and wings—to more soaring spirits; and if, on rare occasions, I have made 'a beast of myself,' I may conscientiously observe that I have never made a bird. Nevertheless, the history of the 'perilous ascents' of aëronauts has been always deeply interesting to me. Consider how infinitely more audacious must that man have been who first rose high enough in the air to risk the breaking of his neck, than he who first intrusted himself to a locomotive, or dived beneath the sea! Since, if anything does go wrong, there is absolutely no escape—none; as no mortal can hope for life, even in a couple of thousand feet fall (the minimum), no matter upon what end, or limb, he may chance to come down.

The Montgolfier brothers, although doubtless the fathers of aëronautics, never won my admiration; they had science, indeed, but they did not believe in it to the extent of trusting their own personal safety to its protection. They sent, instead, a sheep, a cock, and a duck 1500 feet into the air, in one of their balloons, and the poor cock got his wing broken—'through the too great rarefaction of the air,' averred the more sceptical; 'through a kick from the sheep,' retorted the Montgolfiers.

M. Pilatre de Rozier was the first mortal to intrust himself, in 1783, to a balloon, 'of a spheroidal shape, 45 feet wide and 75 high;' but he did not take any very ambitious flight, 'ninety times high as the moon,' by any means. He preferred to rise but 300 feet, and remain at that inconsiderable altitude, 'the balloon being held by long cords until it gradually descended.' One would have thought that this gentleman belonged to that large community of persons who never go into the water before they can swim, but this was not the case. Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes, a major of infantry, were the first who ever tempted Providence in an unfettered balloon. In this 'they soared to an elevation of 3000 feet, and traversed, by a circuitous and irregular course, the whole extent of Paris,' filling, as may well be imagined, its impressionable inhabitants with the idea that the French nation had conquered space, and were about to be the monarchs of Air, as they had been so many centuries, of Earth. 'A curious circumstance occurred during the passage of the floating mass; to the gazers planted on the towers of Notre Dame, it chanced to intercept the body of the sun, and thus gave them, for a few seconds, the spectacle of a total eclipse.' It is my belief that poor M. Rozier never recovered from the idea of having effected this phenomenon; intoxicated with success, he went on ballooning until he dropped, as in those early days was certain to happen sooner or later; and even in these times, it is not an amusement which, indulged in to excess, is looked upon with favour by the insurance-offices. 'It has been alleged,' says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, with some humour, 'that when the balloon had reached so high that the objects on earth were no longer distinguishable, the Marquis d'Arlandes began to think that his curiosity and ambition were sufficiently gratified.' The *savant*, on the other hand, could never get high enough, and was always setting light to more straw. At last, when some cracks were heard near the top of the balloon, and some holes observed to be burning in the sides, the major (and small blame to him) became outrageously terrified, and compelled his companion to take a more unscientific view of things. We can fancy the marquis exclaiming with poor *Panurge*: 'O twice and thrice happy those that plant cabbages; they have always one foot on the ground, and the other not far from it. . . . . O that I were but safe upon dry land, with somebody kicking me behind;' and we entirely sympathise with his feelings of relief upon touching *terra firma*. The two travellers had described a track of six miles, and been in the air twenty-five minutes, some of which must have been very long ones. The machine in which this voyage was made was a smoke-balloon—the Montgolfier plan—and its success goaded M. Charles, the inventor of the hydrogen-gas method, to new experiments.

In a balloon of tiffany, therefore, thus inflated, MM. Charles and Robert started from the Tuileries on the 1st of December, and, in the language of an impassioned spectator, 'soared like demigods to the abode of the Immortals, to receive the reward of intellectual progress.' The demigods descended at Nesle, about twenty-five miles from Paris, in perfect safety. The balloon, although become rather flaccid, still retained a great buoyant force when relieved of the weight of the travellers; and although the sun had set, and the night was beginning to close, M. Charles determined to take another trip without a companion. His courage was well rewarded. Having shot up two miles high in ten minutes, the sun rose again to him in full orb, while the vapours collected below, and covered the earth from his sight. Then the moon began to shine and shed her beams over these accumulated masses. The whole scene and situation were of such a solemn grandeur, that this audacious mortal, alone in the air, and separated from the world of his fellows, could not restrain his tears.

On the 28th of June 1784, an ascent was made at Lyon before the king of Sweden, then travelling as Count Haga—in which character, it will be remembered, M. Dumas introduces him to us—by two aëronauts, one of whom was a young lady—Madame Thiblé. She was the first female who ever made an attempt to rejoin that angelic throng, from which, as we all know, divine woman has been temporarily separated for our delectation; or, in other words, the first lady who was ever up in the clouds. She attained an elevation of 13,500 feet, from whence dropping a flag with staff weighing 14 pounds, it took no less than seven minutes to reach the earth.

On the 19th of September, in the same year, royalty took its first aërial voyage, in the somewhat disreputable person of the Duke de Chartres, afterwards *Egalité* Orleans. When they were 6000 feet high, the duke began to be alarmed at a proximity to heaven which he had never calculated upon reaching, and absolutely 'pierced the lower part of the silk bag with his sword,' in order to get down the quicker. This expedition was up in the clouds—and thunder-clouds too—for five hours, and travelled 135 miles.

There is generally grandeur and always peril in a balloon ascent, but very little of humour; even Mr Albert Smith had a great deal of his natural comicality taken out of him, as he confesses, when *he* tempted the Spirit of the Air some years ago. The following expedition of M. Testu is therefore remarkable, both for his ludicrous persistency in going up in the clouds, and staying there, without any object, and for the absurd obstacles which he encountered in attaining his various elevations. He went up alone in a balloon of glazed tiffany, constructed by himself, and furnished with auxiliary wings, and deferred his departure till four o'clock in the afternoon, when it threatened rain. When 3000 feet high, he found he wanted ballast—which I can easily imagine was the case; and in order to avoid waste of gas, he endeavoured to descend by the reaction of his wings; although these were shattered in the attempt, he managed to alight upon a cornfield, and there he collected stones without leaving the car. Being soon surrounded by curious peasants, the proprietor of the land and his vassals demanded compensation for the damage done to their corn, and on its being refused them, seized hold of the stay of the balloon, which still floated at some height, and so dragged the prisoner through the air, in a sort of triumph, towards the police-office. The whole affair reads like some humorous improbability of Mr Edgar Poe's, transferred by some strange mistake to the Encyclopædias. M. Testu, by pointing to his broken wings, had luckily convinced these people that he could not possibly escape, and finding that their loss and that of his cloak and other articles had considerably lightened the machine, he suddenly cut the stay, or cord, and took an abrupt leave of his astonished captors. He soon arrived at a height from whence he heard thunder rolling beneath him; but as the 'small frozen particles floating in the atmosphere' began to diminish the buoyancy of the balloon, he had to come down again to part with some of the stones, which he was too conscientious to throw overboard at haphazard, although, whatever mischief they did would have been probably put down to aërolites. A third time he descended, in order to obtain a good view of a fox-chase between Etouen and Varville, but determined finally to pass the night in the sky. He was involved in thickest darkness, and then in an awful thunder-storm; the thermometer, read by the lightning flashes, pointed to 21, and snow and sleet fell around him. The balloon, too, was affected with a sort of undulating motion. 'A calm at last succeeding, he had the pleasure of seeing the stars, and embraced that opportunity to take some necessary refreshment.' Fancy that lonely breakfast of his up in the clouds! How high the game must have been, and what an extravagant rise in the bread! At half-past two, the day broke; but he waited to see the sun rise, ere he quietly descended at Campremi, about sixty-eight miles from Paris.

The first English aëronaut appears to have been one Mr Blanchard, who crossed the British Channel in January 1785, in company with Dr Jeffries, an American; but General Money who ascended from Norwich, with the like intention, had the misfortune to drop into the water, and was not rescued for six hours. Another gentleman, in crossing the Irish Channel, encountered the like mishap, and was carried along in his unusual maritime conveyance at something like twenty miles an hour; a ship *going the other way*, however, very benevolently ran her bowsprit into his balloon, and so cut short an excursion which might otherwise have been terminated by the North Pole. It was in attempting to return Mr Blanchard's visit that poor Pilatre de Rozier lost his life in so horrible a manner. The whole apparatus, with himself and M. Romain on board of it, took fire at the height of 8000 feet, and the unfortunate voyagers were of course precipitated to the ground, a mangled chaos. Carlo Brioschi, astronomer-royal at Naples, in company with a celebrated aëronaut, in attempting to rise higher than any other mortal had done before him, got into an atmosphere so rarefied as to burst the balloon; nevertheless, its remnants checked their descent, and saved both their lives for the time; although Brioschi contracted a complaint from the fall which carried him to his grave. A Venetian nobleman and his wife were the next victims, and after them several others.

The parachute (guard for falling) was invented to diminish these risks, and as a means by which the endangered traveller of the upper air might descend at will. Mr Blanchard, during his journey of 300 miles from Lisle, had dropped a dog in a parachute without the animal sustaining any injury; but M. Garnerin was the first human being who ever left his comparatively safe vessel the balloon, in the upper air, and intrusted himself to that miserable cock-boat the parachute. It was doubtless with very terrible feelings that the intrepid fellow severed the cord that united him with the larger machine, and made up his mind to drop from an elevation higher than that of the combined height of the ten highest precipices in Great Britain. For a few seconds, we are told, the parachute, instantly expanding, descended sheer with an astonishing velocity, till it became tossed exceedingly, and took such wide oscillations that the basket, or car, in which the voyager was standing became at times almost horizontal. This oscillation is, it seems, very satisfactorily explained by men of science, and is somehow intimately connected with the square root of 8; but M. Garnerin was not in a condition to be comforted by any such reflection. 'Borne along by the influence of the wind, he passed over Marylebone and Somers Town, and almost grazed the houses of St Pancras. So violent was his fall, at last, that although, according to Cocker (but not that unhappy Cocker who fell from a parachute upon Blackheath), he ought to have only received such a shock as a person would get who drops freely from 8¾ feet, 'he was cast on his face, and a good deal cut with stones.' One of the stays of the machine had given way, it seems, and placed him in the most imminent peril throughout the descent; and 'he was much agitated and trembled excessively upon being released from the car.'

Of all the narratives of balloon ascents, however, there is none so satisfactory, because none undertaken with a more calm resolve, or a more noble motive, than that of M. Gay-Lussac, the (then) young French philosopher. He had been up in the clouds, in company with his friend M. Biot, once before, but had not reached an elevation sufficient to satisfy himself. Upon that occasion, they had taken up some birds and insects, and let them loose in the upper regions of the atmosphere, with some remarkable results. A violet bee 'flew away very swiftly, making a humming noise;' but at the altitude of 11,000 feet (I again quote from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*), a green linnet, 'feeling itself abandoned in the midst of an unknown ocean, returned, and settled on the stays of the balloon.' A pigeon, placed on the edge of the car, 'rested awhile, measuring as it were the breadth of that unexplored sea which it designed to traverse; now launching into the abyss, it fluttered irregularly, and seemed to try its wings in the thin element; till, after a few strokes, it gained more confidence, and whirling in large spirals, like the birds of prey, it precipitated itself towards the mass of extended clouds, where it was lost from sight.'

Great precautions to secure accuracy had been taken in the preparation of the scientific instruments of the two philosophers; but even still more care was exercised in respect to those which M. Gay-Lussac took up with him in his solitary flight. As it had been found impossible to count the vibrations of the magnetic needle, except during the very short intervals between the contrary rotations of the balloon, a needle of only six inches long was prepared, which should oscillate more quickly. The dipping-needle—about which, however, he was unable to detect anything certain—was magnetised and adjusted by the famous M. Coulomb. To protect the thermometer from the direct rays of the sun, it was enclosed within cylinders of pasteboard, covered with gilt paper. The hygrometers were sheltered nearly in the same way. The glass flasks, intended to bring down specimens of air from the highest regions of the atmosphere, had been so accurately exhausted, and their stop-cocks so carefully fitted, that after a lapse of eight days, they still preserved the vacuum.

'At the altitude of 14,480 feet, M. Gay-Lussac found that a key held in the magnetic direction, repelled with its lower, and attracted with its upper, end the north pole of the needle of a small compass . . . . and it did the same at the vast height of 20,150 feet; a clear proof that the magnetism of the earth exerts its influence at the remotest distances. . . . . The thermometer which stood at 82° by Fahrenheit when he left the earth, subsided to 32·9 on the verge of congelation at the height of 18,636 feet, and to 14·9 at the utmost limit of the ascent, which was 23,040 *feet above the level of the sea.* . . . . The air was here more than twice as thin as usual (the barometer having sunk to 12·95 inches), and rushed through the narrow opening of his exhausted flask with a whistling noise; but upon a subsequent analysis of it, below, it was found to be made up of the ordinary proportions. The philosopher, though warmly clad, suffered here from excessive cold. He also felt a difficulty in breathing, and his pulse and respiration were much quickened. His throat also became so parched from inhaling the dry attenuated air that he could hardly swallow a morsel of food; but beyond these, he experienced no inconveniences.'

Thus ends the tale of such balloon excursions as may be called historical. In more recent times, the thing has become a common exhibition, with money taken at the doors of the place of ascent, and a regular scale of charges—according to the size of the machine and the fame of the aëronaut—been set up, from ten guineas downwards for each passenger; at the contemplation of which vulgarities the Muse of History grows dumb. Nevertheless, the little party that travelled from London to Nassau performed perhaps the most striking journey in the annals of locomotion; while the late Mr Green was doubtless one before whom, as a daring adventurer, Mungo Park must pale. Marvellous, indeed, it was, that he who counted his aërial excursions by the hundred, should die in his bed at the usual number of feet above the level of the sea. I myself had once the distinguished honour of sitting in the same car with him, under the great balloon that had been to Germany, and the following are the particulars of my own ascent:

The great Nassau had been advertised for some days to start for the clouds, and myself and a college-friend, determined to tempt the dangers of the air, had secured two places in it. I cannot say that the knowledge that I was booked for the expedition, and could not possibly be balked in my expectation, gave me total and unalloyed satisfaction. I could not divorce my mind from the idea of the elevation which awaited me: I regarded the sun in the light of a luminous body with which I was about to be brought into personal contact; and I also found myself making curious calculations as to how long it would take a person—of

12 stone 6—to fall, upon a calm day, from twice the height of St Paul's. I passed several miserable nights in shooting downwards through bottomless space, and all of a sudden coming to earth with a smash and—waking. The great Nassau, in fact, fully inflated and presenting a very threatening appearance, sat upon my chest whenever I suffered myself to slumber for a moment. Nevertheless, terrible as that tremendous machine was, as a nightmare, it was nothing to the horror with which I was inspired upon first beholding it in reality and open day. My sensations in childhood, upon reading of the awful increasing helmet in the *Castle of Otranto*, can alone be compared to those with which I contemplated the swelling, swaying mass which was perhaps about to bear me—by an exceedingly roundabout method—to my grave. I would have given the ten pounds already paid, twice over, to any fool out of that gaping crowd who would have taken my place in the car, without the exchange being discovered. That the same reflection was also permanent in the breast of my friend Jones was evident to me; but we had both far too much native delicacy to hint at the real state of affairs within us.

'We shall have a beautiful ascent,' observed he, tremulously, as we stepped into the car.

'Beautiful,' echoed I, with my teeth chattering; 'but don't you think the wind is getting up?'

'Yes,' replied he in a sort of frantic whisper, 'I do think so. It's going to be a tempest; one of the most frightful tempests within the memory of man.'

Our fellow-passengers, with the exception of Mr Green, wore the most miserable countenances of any three persons I ever beheld. It was easy to see that the laughter and cheering of the crowd beneath was grating upon their feelings precisely as it may be supposed to do upon those unfortunate persons who are about to be 'turned off'—to be *sus. per coll.*, as the Latins have it—in front of the Old Bailey.

'Come, gentlemen,' exclaimed the aëronaut with untimely cheerfulness, 'if you have any messages for the world below, you had better leave them; we shall be off in a few minutes.'

How the huge billowy mass above did undulate, and what a terrible strain there began to be upon the ropes beneath!

'How long shall it be, *exactly*, sir, before we start?' inquired I.

'Not one minute,' replied he, looking me steadily in the face—not half a minute, sir. If you have any fears for yourself, any doubts in my experience'——

'I *have*,' exclaimed I, with unaffected earnestness; 'the greatest, the very greatest, I do assure you.'

'Then down the rope with you, like a shot.'

I *was* down the rope like a shot. I felt the ground once more—the beautiful firm ground—under my feet. I was thankful to Providence, to the aëronaut, to myself, to everybody: I did not heed the mocking jeers of that thoughtless throng in the very slightest. The bands began to play, the flags to wave, the mighty dome to shoot up from the cast-off ropes, with poor Jones on board of it. I felt the tears in the neighbourhood of my eyes as I thought upon his miserable condition. I watched him 'as far as human eye could see' into the empyrean, and then I went to the refreshment-room for a glass of brandy. Picture my horror, then, upon my arrival there, when I saw Jones's very counterpart standing at the bar of it already, and in the act of drinking brandy himself! I really thought that it was my poor friend dropped from the clouds.

'Smith!' cried he, turning round upon a sudden. 'Goodness gracious! can this be you?'

His gaze was directed to the blue abyss above us, as though he would say: 'Why, I thought you were up there, my unhappy friend;' but his tongue refused its office. He had not known of my escape any more than I of his: he had not waited to hear what I replied to Mr Green, but he had heard what Mr Green had inquired of me, and slipped down the rope that was nearest to him, even before I had done the same.

It will thus be seen that, although I have been in a balloon, I cannot exactly profess to be an aëronaut; and yet how infinitely more judicious was my conduct than that of the intrepid citizen of the United States who is even now roaming about the fields of air, unable to get down again into his own beloved country, or indeed into any other. He was ignorant of everything connected with aërostation, and had merely paid his money, as we did, to go up with a professional. They went up, and came down again in safety; but, upon touching earth, the aëronaut incautiously stepped first out of the car, let go of it, and the balloon, relieved of his weight, reascended with its astonished occupant. This, I think, was in the September of last year; and, according to the latest American advices, this voyager in spite of himself *has not been heard of yet*. When Jones and I read of this occurrence in the newspapers, we felt ourselves steeled against all ridicule, for the remainder of our lives, upon the subject of our attempted ascent in the great Nassau.

ECHOES.

What time we hold the onward track,
Into the Future pressing fast,
Up from the caverns of the Past
There comes a lingering echo back—

A noiseless echo of the days
That were to us, yet are no more,
Of many friends we knew before
Within our ancient dwelling-place.

And muffled sounds, without our will,
Come up to us as from the grave,
Or as the murmur of the wave
Afar off when the night is still:

Old voices long forgotten quite,
Or seeming unto us forgot,
Like music from some distant grot,
That trembles on the breeze of night.

There is a change come over all;
Decay upon the aspen leaves,
And blight upon the autumn sheaves;
Eternal silence like a pall:

As when the dumb dark earth is laid
In sadness o'er the beautiful,
And blinded eyes with tears are dull
To see the havoc death has made.

The happy smile, the clasped hand,
The gleesome laugh shall be no more;
The spirits calm we loved before
Have passed into another land.

They are a portion of the Past.
Yet comes a noiseless echo back,
What time we hold the onward track,
Into the Future pressing fast.

D.

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FACTS AND IDEAS ABOUT ROBERT BURNS.

THE growing celebrity of Burns has had the effect, common in such cases, of exaggerating all popular conceptions regarding him, every point of his character, and every peculiarity of his life, excepting only those, perhaps, which it is pleasant to dwell upon. We propose, on this occasion, to advert to a few facts tending to correct those erroneous popular notions, and, at the same time, to bring forward a few particulars regarding the poet, hitherto little, or not at all known.

His being made an exciseman has usually been felt as an unfortunate circumstance, and it has been spoken of with the more bitterness, as he is supposed to have been censured and kept back from due promotion in that walk, in consequence of his democratic sentiments at the crisis of the French Revolution. Now, the truth is, that there was hardly any other branch of the public service which Burns would have fitted; so that it was Hobson's choice with him—this or none. And equally true it is that for this position he had some positive qualifications in his knowledge of mathematics. He never expressed himself as discontented with the situation, but the contrary, and there is proof that he did his duty in it satisfactorily. By favour of a gentleman in Somerset House, we have received memoranda from documents transferred to that establishment from the Scottish Excise Office—from which it appears that Burns was well reputed as an officer. In one list, dated October 1789, while others are spoken of as intemperate, weak, &c., the entry about Burns speaks of him as untried, but adds, in interlineation—'turns out well.' In a list dated 1793, the remark about him is: 'Does pretty well.' From another list we learn that the poet was, on the 27th January 1791, marked for promotion; that he was not struck off for his political opinions; that at the time of his death in July 1796, there were three on the list to be raised to supervisorships before him, and that, had he lived half a year longer, he would have received this promotion, as the opening occurred on the 12th January 1797. This is a very valuable and interesting fact, as the promotion would have not only given Burns and his family superior comfort, but might have had a good effect on his whole frame of life, by reason that it would have raised him more securely above the invasions of an inferior style of society. The next advance, to a collectorship, would have given him five hundred a year.

As it was, Burns did not live so poorly as is generally supposed. His eldest son, who died two years ago, always said that his father and mother, sitting in their neat, well-furnished parlour, with their maid-servant in the kitchen, left the impression of a genteel style of life upon his youthful mind. And certainly in such country towns as Dumfries, there were then many respectable families living on an income of seventy pounds a year. We believe the truth to have been, that Burns did not feel anything like the pinch of poverty till his last illness caused a stoppage of his salary.

Although never rich, or even in what might be called easy circumstances, it is surprising how often we meet with Burns in the capacity of a patron and an accommodator. When driving the plough at Mossgiel, he kept and educated a poor orphan boy, the child of one of his father's servants. He allowed the child to ride out on his plough-horses, and would bring him home on his own shoulders; after which, he would employ an evening hour in teaching him to read. A sister of this boy, oppressed with the charge of a young family, broke down and became ill. Burns caused milk to be sent from his own dairy to her; but afterwards learning that she continued to droop, and might be the better of being obliged to take exercise in the open air, he issued a good-natured order, that, unless 'Janet' came and got the milk 'warm from the cow,' she should have no more. She obeyed, and got rapidly better. His brother Gilbert was sharp, and something of a disciplinarian, with the reapers; but there was never anything but help and encouraging looks from Robert.

It is well known that the poet, on realising a few hundreds by his volume, lent L.180 to his brother Gilbert. To a younger brother, he also offered pecuniary assistance. It has latterly come out that he lent some money to a friend named Clark, a schoolmaster, to assist him in setting up a boarding academy at Forfar; and a letter written in his latter days to this gentleman, asking for 'another [20s.] note,' was not, as heretofore thought, an entreaty for a loan, but a modest request for the repayment of a debt. Among other recent revelations regarding Burns, one of the most curious makes him appear as assisting one Crombie, a builder, with his name at a bill for twenty pounds. Crombie had no claim upon the poet. He had been the builder of the farmhouse at Ellisland, and Burns merely felt for him as a friend. When the bill became due, Crombie could not withdraw it, and Burns appears as prepared to pay instead.

There is abundance of evidence that the poet was not merely a generous sentimentalist in his verse.

He did not confine himself to complimenting his old mare on New Year's morning, but did give the 'rip for her auld baggie.' He did not merely write feelingly about the wounded hare, but he avoided field-sports from a sense of their cruelty. It was quite of his nature to have turned the plough aside from the 'silly wa's' of the poor mouse, as he says he turned the weeder-clips away from the thistle, to 'spare the symbol dear.' He had a kindliness for all weak and tender things. As a boy, he composed little stories for infant sisters. Little children were often seen on his knee; and his manner with them was most engaging. There is a well-known story of his being betrayed one day into a rough expression regarding an argumentative clergyman, who had challenged the merits of Gray's *Elegy*. We shall here relate it with the addition of place and names, and the still more valuable adjunct of a trait of Burns's reverence towards infancy. It was at the house of Mr Christison,* one of the teachers of the High School, that the incident took place, the occasion being a private breakfast-party. Mrs Christison sat at the head of the table with her infant on her knee; and Burns was placed beside her. The Rev. Mr Robb, minister of Tongland, one of the guests, entered upon a wrangling hypercritical canvas of the merits of the famed *Elegy*. Burns defended Gray, but could not silence his paradoxical opponent, who further bored him with very incorrect quotations from the poem. Losing patience at last, Burns exclaimed: 'Sir, I now perceive that a man may be an excellent judge of poetry by square and rule, and after all be a d—— blockhead!' There was instant silence, and an unpleasant state of feeling. Burns, however, at once relieved the company, and particularly the lady of the house, by turning to her infant and saying: 'I beg your pardon, my little dear.' This concession to the sanctity of infancy, while making none to conceit and dogmatism, was often adverted to by Mrs Christison afterwards, as a remarkable trait of Burns.

We lately remarked the entire absence from the history and character of Burns of everything like shabbiness or meanness. His complete exemption from vanity is even more striking, when we consider how much of a besetting sin it is with the tuneful tribe. We never find him betrayed into a single expression of self-conceit. He says remarkably little about his own writings or their fortunes in the world. He often praises those of other people, particularly the works of his predecessors, Ramsay and Fergusson. In this respect, he bears an interesting resemblance to Scott, who carried appreciation of the productions of his friends to a weakness. Two such instances might make a respectable appearance in any theory of the superiority of great talents to jealousy. The readiness of Burns to use his poetical gift for the benefit of others, is also remarkable. How few of the poets of the present day would think of writing a hundred songs for one musical publication, and about a hundred and eighty for another, as Burns did, and, like him, refuse all remuneration! There was something about the character and position of actors and actresses which interested Burns's feelings. He was particularly ready to assist them with his pen. One Sutherland, who came to play at the Dumfries Theatre, was recommended to him, and, after the shortest acquaintance, he sent the poor man a prologue for the New-year's evening (1790). In an unpublished letter, which accompanied the verses, he said: 'Use, alter, or, if you please, neglect them . . . . but if they can be of any service to Mr Sutherland and his friends, I shall kiss my hand to my lady-muse, and own myself her debtor.' How modest—how delicate! There is something affecting in the subsequent history of the letter, as lately communicated to us from a country town in the south of Scotland, where it was kept. Sutherland gave it to one of the actresses of his company, who felt a veneration for the genius of Burns. 'She died many years ago in poor circumstances in Jedburgh, and on her death-bed, gave it to an old man who had been kind to her in her distress.' Probably, it was the only means she had of requiting the kindness.

Burns would not have been human if there had not been what are called inconsistencies in his character—by which we here mean peculiarities that do not appear in strict harmony or keeping with each other. But in him there was certainly a liability to pass into opposite frames of mind far beyond what is common. Reverence for religion and its observances was shewn in his *Cotter's Saturday Night*, as well as in his own practice of conducting family worship after the death of his father. How ready he was to pass into a strain of levity on such matters appears sufficiently in his writings. He is spoken of by many as a melancholy man; yet we know how he delighted in scenes of convivial merriment, and what power he possessed of raising ludicrous emotions in his readers. It might be said that we never knew the full extent of the transitoriness of all Burns's apparently strongest feelings, till we got a view of his life and writings traced as from day to day in a recent publication.* It there appears that his pathetic parting with Highland Mary was an event within a very few days of his writing an ultra-comic poem burlesquing all the humble amours of his village. Some years later, he was engaged in two affairs of extreme jovialty, the Peck o' Maut, and the Contest for the Dane's bacchanalian prize whistle; and close upon these doings—certainly within four days of the latter—he poured from his anguished heart the verses to Mary in Heaven. The day after that composition, he was again writing jocular poetry. All his readers must remember his letter to Mr Graham of Fintry, in December 1792, on learning that his political conduct had given offence to his Excise patrons. 'I could brave misfortune—I could face ruin—for, at the worst, "Death's thousand doors stand open;" but . . . . the claims and ties that I see at this moment and feel around me, how they unnerve courage and wither resolution. . . . . I am surprised, confounded, and distracted.' Well, the New Year came on a very few days after; and we find Burns writing to Mrs Dunlop on the 2d of January, in a sobriety-professing, moralising strain. But there is every reason to believe that on that very night he had two friends with him, and kept up the merry splore, as he would have called it, till next morning. So, also, there are various instances of Burns writing in a very doleful strain about himself to such sober-minded persons as Mrs Dunlop, and three days after addressing somebody of a different character in a strain that would indicate him as a man full of health and prosperity. There seems to have been a surprising *légèreté* of nature in Burns—the quality that at once tends to induce misfortune and allows of its being easily borne. Sad and even tragic things depressed him but for a very brief space. It is among the latest revelations regarding him, that he meant to give a picture of his mind in the song of *Contented wi'*

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* Afterwards Professor of Humane Literature in the University of Edinburgh, and father of our eminent physician and distinguished toxicologist, Dr Robert Christison of Edinburgh.

* *Life and Works of Robert Burns.* By Robert Chambers. 4 vols.

Little and Canty wi' Mair, of which the following are some of the stanzas:

I whiles claw the elbow o' troublesome thought;
But man is a sodger, and life is a faught:
My mirth and good-humour are coin in my pouch,
And my freedom's a lairdship nae monarch dare touch.

A towmond o' trouble, should that be my fa',
A night o' guid-fellowship sowthers it a';
When at the blithe end of our journey at last,
Wha the deil ever thinks o' the road he has past?

Every generous moralist will be disposed to set great store by his penitential expressions, as an offset against any errors that can justly be laid to his charge. Yet even here we cannot fix down Burns, for there are many expressions also shewing a spirit of levity regarding his offences. One is at the same time witched out of all disposition to shake the head over such traits of his insensibility, by the intensely comic light into which he sometimes contrived to place his aberrations or his repute with the more serious portion of mankind. We lately lighted upon an altogether fresh example of this kind of comicality, in an impromptu he inscribed on the blank leaf of a copy of Fergusson's Poems, which he presented to Mrs Professor Dalzell of Edinburgh.

Jeremiah, 15 *chap.*, 10 *verse.*

Ah! woe is me, my mother dear!
A man of strife ye 've borne me;
For sair contention I maun bear,
They hate, revile, and scorn me:

I ne'er could lend on bill or band,
That five per cent. might blest me;
And borrowing, on the tither hand,
The deil a ane would trust me.

Yet I, a coin-denyed wight,
By Fortune quite discarded,
Ye see how I am, day and night,
By lad and lass blackguarded!

The turn he here gives to the prophet's lament that, notwithstanding his being free from usury, the people cursed him, is assuredly very waggish, remembering all that Burns knew to lie at his debit in the books of the 'unco guid.'

BARGAIN-HUNTING.

Mr Warren and his niece Marion had been waiting in the drawing-room for the arrival of his sister-in-law and her three daughters, for more than an hour, and the old gentleman was getting impatient for his tea; he had been inveigled up to town at least three weeks before his presence would be necessary at the wedding of one of these young ladies; and though, during all that time, he had been subjected to their endless colloquies about 'shopping,' and their triumphant pæans over their 'bargains,' the *trousseau* was by no means complete yet.

In that late autumn evening, the female four were still cheapening silks and muslins in the accustomed manner.

It was not the present inconvenience, however, which, to do him justice, was troubling Mr Warren, so much as his reflections upon the system which the ladies were thus thoughtlessly pursuing. He could not now forbear giving Marion his opinion upon the matter, although, in consideration for the happy event which was in such close prospect, he had hitherto spared his nieces.

'I can recollect the time,' said he, 'when people paid for the quality of what they bought; but now, when the world goes so fast, the passion is for cheapness, and we hear people boasting of their bargains, forgetting the many who, in consequence, are half clad and hungry; and when the poor man's health goes, what has he to look to? When the rich are ill, they have rest and ease and cordials to revive them, and the balmy breath of foreign climes; but when the poor artisan dies, it is often because the world in his employer's hand has gone round so fast, that he has had no time to feel the invigorating breath of his own hillside breezes. In sickness, the rich man diverts his mind by the elegances and refinements of life, and solaces himself with the consolations of religion; the poor man often knows not what they mean. Many who once knew they had a soul, have had its light long since extinguished by the all-absorbing object of finding food to keep life warm within them.'

'These are appalling statements, dear uncle,' said Marion. 'The evils must lie with the legislature and with men in power—we have little influence in these matters, and what we can do is but as a drop in the ocean.'

'It may be so, Marion; but the influence of every British female is more commanding than that of any other female throughout the world. Think of the departments more peculiarly patronised by female influence; think of the numbers of young females who annually lose, many their sight, and many their lives, while working long and weary hours in the millinery and dressmaking establishments of our country.'

'Yet, what can be done, uncle?' inquired Marion. 'What can be done? What can I do? I have no influence. I can do nothing to help.'

At this moment a loud ring at the door-bell announced the return of the wanderers; and after the lapse of a few moments, spent, probably, in disrobing themselves of their outer wrappings, the drawing-room door opened, and Mrs Warren entered, accompanied by her three daughters. Many apologies were made for the apparent neglect of the guests; and the excuse pleaded was the multitude of little matters that still remained undone, in prospect of the 25th, which was to be the wedding-day, and to be present on which, Mr Warren, Aunt Mary, and Marion, had come to town. Julia, the young bride, looked pleased and happy; Lucy, her young sister, was, as was her custom, in high spirits; while the third and eldest Miss Warren, Elizabeth, was too much occupied with the care and due adjustment of a multitude of paper parcels of all sizes, which she carried into the room with her, to notice any one.

At length they were all gathered round the tea-table, and the business of tea was commenced.

'And now for the news,' said Lucy; 'we have done a great deal this evening; and, mamma, I think it is only fair that Aunt Mary and Marion, left at home to amuse themselves, should participate in our exploits.'

'I really think we have a right to know them,' said Aunt Mary, good-humouredly; 'your sudden disappearance at this unusual hour calls for some explanation.'

'The explanation, then, is this,' replied Lucy, in a low tone, 'that we were all bent upon going, where we were not so fond of being seen at an earlier part of the day, to one of those extraordinary shops where one gets things almost for nothing, and where, I suppose, in a few years, a premium will be offered to any lady who will be so very kind and obliging as to accept of their articles'——

'We certainly have made some extraordinary purchases,' said Julia, interrupting her sister; 'such bargains I never saw!' and she proceeded to enumerate various little fancy articles which, as they were named, were duly unrolled from their several papers by the silent Elizabeth, and handed for inspection to the company.

'And the dresses,' continued Julia, 'they certainly were bargains. Flushington told us we could not get them anywhere else for double the money, because he deals with a manufactory where they give the people the very least sums in the world, and employ a great number. They are imitations, to be sure, but are they not very lovely?'

'Stop, stop,' cried Elizabeth, who had been measuring the cloth. 'I am a yard short, and here is a great hole!'

'Oh, never mind that,' said Lucy, as though she enjoyed the discovery; 'it was cheap, and that is enough.'

'Well, we shall not mind it then,' continued Julia; 'there is enough without the missing yard; indeed, we have bought many things we did not much want, just because they were so temptingly cheap; but the greatest bargain is yet to come.'

'The mittens,' said Lucy; 'yes, certainly the mittens were wonders. I bought gloves, silk, needles, and meshes some weeks ago, to make a pair for myself, and here we have got mittens beautifully made for less actually than I paid for the materials.'

Here Elizabeth placed upon the table a bundle of beautifully finished black lace mittens.

'They are all hand-wrought,' said Aunt Mary, taking up one of them, 'and are exquisitely done; much time must have been spent upon them.'

'Yes,' said Lucy, 'I know that from experience; mine go on at snail's pace. I would not make a pair for any one under three times the sum we paid for these. We were just leaving the shop, when we observed them, and I priced one pair, which was not much more than I had paid for my materials; but we had already bought so many things, that we thought we might get them still cheaper, so we offered Flushington a small sum for each, provided we took the whole parcel of them—there are so many of us, we shall soon wear them out—and after some deliberation he gave us them, and certainly they are bargains.'

'Wonderful bargains!' repeated the other two sisters.

'But we have not done yet, Julia; the dress for Mrs Philips—you must not forget that.'

'Oh, I do not forget it,' said Julia. 'We bought a dress, which I am to wear on Monday evening, Marion.'

'On Monday evening!' repeated Marion—'and this is Saturday night; surely it cannot be made so quickly, and with all the bugle-trimmings you wish.'

'O yes, we have managed that too. We went to Mrs Primrose, and told her it must be done—in short, that it was indispensable. At first, she said it was impossible; but after hinting about further orders, she said it should be done.'

'Bugle-trimmings and all,' added Elizabeth; 'for I heard her whisper to her forewoman to tell a young person—who, I know, is her best worker in bugles—that she could not get away this evening; so I am sure it will be done, and well done, too.'

'And now, uncle,' said Lucy, 'now that our narration is over, have we not been most actively and most creditably employed?'

There was no answer from Mr Warren for a few seconds, during which time the quick-sighted Marion discovered that his cogitations were not of a pleasant nature.

'Lucy,' he at length said, 'do you wish a candid answer to your question? for if so, I am sorry I cannot give it, without causing you all pain. In the midst of so much hilarity, and so many pleasing anticipations, I feel grieved to say anything that may damp your mirth; but when I remember that Julia is about to take her place as a British matron, I cannot refrain from speaking openly upon the subject.'

'Julia, my dear,' continued the old man affectionately, taking her hand, 'you are about to become the wife of a very noble young man. I am glad he is not among us to-night; his mind is too quick-sighted, and his heart is too generous, not to have been wounded by the recital of your evening's transactions. I believe you have gone through them in thoughtlessness; but you are about to leave your girlish days behind, and to enter a condition which, whatever be the station in life, is one full of responsibility and of influence. Times are greatly changed. Long ago, our grandmothers were content with a few handsome dresses, for which they paid a reasonable sum; the ladies of the olden time wore one kind of dress, and those in a lower position another; now, every shop swarms with imitations, so that all ranks may at a trifling sum be decked out with flimsy perishable articles: this, however, affects the taste of the times, and what I wish to speak of to you is rather the *morale* of the matter. Just before you came in, Marion and I were talking of the sad state of thousands of our fellow-creatures, who work long and weary hours in an atmosphere fatal to health; while thousands of their more enlightened and highly educated brothers and sisters, knowing all this, in the frantic struggle for cheapness, do all in their power to sink them still lower in the oppressions of a life which, while it often kills the body, oftener slays the soul. In every department, go where we will, we find few exceptions to the general rule, excessive work or very low wages. I do not mean to impugn Flushington's respectability, for I know nothing of him; but I know that many shops are opened by young men, who begin by advertising that they will undersell their neighbours, and many of such people have two prices. The bargain-hunter enters the shop, and the tradesman feels that either he must sell his goods under their value, or lose his customer; consequently he is tempted to compromise the matter by overreaching some other person, or by reducing still further the already miserable remuneration of some poor labourer connected with his business. Few among us ever think, while admiring the many beautiful textures of the day, how it fares with the multitudes who spun the slender thread, laid it on the loom, and coloured it with its many-tinted pattern; we hear only of exultations of delight at its being purchased for a small sum. We cannot lift the veil, but methinks it would sometimes be a saddening sight, could we follow to their homes the wretched makers of lucifer-boxes and envelopes, the female shirt-makers and others employed by these cheap houses, while the rich, the enlightened, the Christian purchaser sits calmly by his fire, and under the shade of his own home-tree, makes his boast of bargaining!

'These things are crying sins, and they are national sins; but females little think of the influence they possess in all shopping transactions when they stoop to bargaining, and thus become encouragers of fraud and cruelty. I consider it the duty of every lady to endeavour to acquire correct ideas of the value of the several articles which come more especially under her own inspection. Make it a rule never to purchase anything knowingly under its real value. If a tradesman offer you a piece of goods which you are quite convinced is under its worth, reject it, and in future shun the shop; if it is offered you by a poor vender in evident distress, take it, but give the full value.

'No example could more fully suit me at present than that painful affair of the black lace mittens. Lucy owns from experience she knew the value of the materials and the labour of the work. They were offered cheaply even at first, probably much too cheaply to repay the waste of some poor fellow-creature's eyes; and yet you were not satisfied, but forced the tradesman either to run the risk of offending you, or of bleeding the heart of some poor creature to an extent of which we little dream, and which we can never know. When any of you come to visit me at Rookwood, may I beg that I may never see these mittens worn; I should always fancy that I saw the words "hand-wrought" engraved upon them, and that some poor miserable woman, in consequence, sat weeping in a cold garret; but I have done with this. I wish to say a few words about the transaction at Mrs Primrose's.

'We all know the great mortality that takes place annually in the dressmaking and millinery departments; and it is likewise to be feared that there is considerable encroachment practised on the sacred hours of the Sabbath. Many ladies, I feel glad to say, in order effectually, so far as they are concerned, to prevent the possibility of giving any pretext for the system, invariably give their orders early in the week, so that they may be finished with ease before its expiration. If an emergency arise suddenly, requiring a new dress, the considerate lady will never for a moment hesitate between the evanescent gratification of appearing in a new dress, and the harrowing conviction, that to feed her vanity, a fellow-sister has been oppressed and defrauded of that rest, which the Eye which looks upon all impartially wishes to see man universally enjoying. Did the anticipated delight of wearing a new dress so darken your conscience, that you were unable to appreciate the amount of sorrow which may at this moment oppress the heart of the young female who is now employed with your bugle-embroidery, and is thereby prevented from going home this evening? My dear girls, these things ought not to be. I see I am deeply grieving you all, but these are subjects of deep import. Think well of them, and may they for ever be a lesson to you.'

Here a servant entered the room, whispered a few words to Aunt Mary, which broke off the conversation.

'Helen Campbell,' said Aunt Mary in surprise, 'is she below? Yes, I will see her. This is the young person,' said she, addressing her nieces, 'about whom I wished to interest you; I should like your brother also to see her. Her story is simply this: She is the support of an aged mother, who has once seen better days, and is now in extreme poverty and want, and is dying of consumption. Shew her in,' said she to the servant, who immediately left the room.

'Perhaps,' said Mr Warren, 'the sight of so many may appal her'—but there was no time to recall the order, for the door immediately opened, and Helen Campbell, a slight, delicate, gentle-looking girl, walked in with modest ease; yet with that fixed and anxious expression with which one might enter a crowded room, and yet see no one in particular, the mind and thoughts being concentrated elsewhere. Like the dying gladiator, 'her thoughts were with her heart, and that was far away.'

'My poor Helen,' said Aunt Mary kindly, taking her hand, and placing her on a chair, 'I fear you have bad news; is your mother worse to-night?'

'O yes,' said the poor girl, as the tears began to chase each other down her thin cheeks. 'She is greatly worse, and they tell me she is going—that she cannot live now.'

'How is this?' inquired Aunt Mary anxiously. 'When I saw her in the beginning of the week, she seemed better. Is her cough worse? is there any new symptom? or what is it?'

'No new symptom,' said Helen sadly, 'but weakness, dreadful weakness.'

'Is her appetite gone, then?' inquired Aunt Mary.

'No, no!' replied Helen, as the blood mounted to her forehead, and she bit her lip, as if trying to maintain a measure of composure; 'it is not gone, but she —has nothing to eat.'

'I am distressed to hear all this, Helen,' interrupted Aunt Mary. 'I have not gone to see you for some days past, thinking you were not in need. When I saw you last, you expected plenty of money, to buy wine and food to bring up her strength.'

'So I did,' replied the girl. 'When I saw you, I was full of good hopes, but they are all gone now. I had worked nearly night and day for three weeks, and expected great remuneration for my work. Day after day I have called for payment, and have always been put off; and when at last I entreated for some money to-night, Flushington told me he has been obliged to sell the things for almost nothing, and could not give me anything at all till Monday. My mittens—my beautiful mittens, how I doted on them!'

'Flushington!' said Aunt Mary, much amazed, and taking up one of the bargain-gloves which still lay upon the table, 'are these your work, Helen?' she said.

'Oh, yes,' said poor Helen, clasping the mitten in both hands, and bursting into tears; 'on which I built so many hopes—food and wine, and life, and strength, and happy days were thought of with every new row, and all is gone.'

Julia covered her face with both hands, and her sisters became very thoughtful. Aunt Mary rose and poked the fire, and even Uncle Warren took out his pocket-handkerchief, and made so great a noise that poor Helen's sobs could not be heard.

'But there was another source from which I thought you were to get money, Helen—your sister?'

'Yes, yes,' replied Helen, 'so I thought; she was to have been home to-night with her earnings, and we had planned to buy so many things; but she did not come, and, on going for her to Mrs Primrose's, I was told at the door that I could not see her—that she could not be home to-night—that she was busy again with more bugle-trimmings—nor could her money be paid till the dress on which she now works is finished, which must be by Monday evening.'

Aunt Mary again poked the fire, and Julia, uttering a faint cry, sunk her still covered face upon the table.

'O, ma'am, forgive me,' said Helen, suddenly starting to her feet; 'forgive me that once more I ask you for help; but my poor mother is dying, and she is—starving.'

In a moment Mr Warren's hand was on the bell. 'Get a coach instantly,' said he to the servant who appeared; 'and, Mrs Warren, get wine and bread ready immediately. I myself will go with this poor girl. Julia, get your cloak and bonnet: I wish you to go with me.'

In a few moments the carriage arrived, and a bottle of wine and various kinds of food were quickly placed in a basket, and they prepared to go.

'Sir,' said Helen earnestly, 'may I ask you to take out the cork from the wine-bottle, that there may be no delay when we arrive—there is no screw near us, and she has so longed for wine!'

This being done, Mr Warren, Julia, and Helen Campbell were soon on their way.

'I fear we may alarm your mother at this hour,' said Mr Warren.

'Oh no, sir,' replied Helen; 'the door we enter by is at her back. You can be in the room without her seeing you at first. She is watched over by some kind Scotchwomen, who live beside us. Oh, how I wish we were there!'

The way was long, however; but in due time they did arrive, and following Helen along a dark passage, and down a narrow stair, they found themselves in a small miserable-looking room. Mr Warren seated Julia along with himself on two wooden stools, while Helen, rushing in with the basket, took from the table a little broken cup, which she filled with wine, and hastened to refresh the poor sufferer, whose face was concealed from Mr Warren's view. It was with delight that Mr Warren witnessed what had so often before melted his heart—the kindness of the poor to the poor. Several wretched-looking women, hard worked and worn out, yet kept alive by the woman's heart within them, stood around the sick-bed; and as Helen approached with the little broken cup and the wine, one of them with the utmost tenderness, laying her hand gently on her arm, said kindly:

'Na, na, Miss, she's past that noo; she'll drink nae mair o' the fruit o' the vine in this warld.'

'Wine!' cried another woman—'is't wine?—and she cried sae sair for 't yesterday.'

'Dear mother,' said Helen, fondly bending over her, 'you must take it—it will soon revive you; and see!' said she, holding up the basket, 'here is bread and sago, and many things to make you well.'

'Wae's me,' said one of the women; 'and her that's had naething but cauld water and crusts the day.'

'Dear mother,' continued Helen, 'will you not drink? It will revive you, it will cheer you, it will make you live.'

There was no answer. The poor widow's sorrows were over.

* * * *

Taking one of the women aside, Mr Warren put a guinea into her hand, desiring her to use it as she thought best for poor Helen's comfort, whom he should see again on the morrow. He then took Julia out of the room, kindly leading her through the dark passage up the narrow stair, after which she hurried to the carriage, into a corner of which she threw herself in an agony of tears.

Some time passed, during which he did not disturb her. At length, taking her hand, 'My dear Julia,' he said, 'it is enough. This evening has been one of the most painful of your hitherto uncheckered life. We shall say no more of the earlier transactions of the evening, but will now only consider how we may best assist poor Helen Campbell and her sister. But suffer one parting word of advice from an old man who loves you dearly. Do not too easily dismiss from your mind the events of this night. Think of them often, and place them before you; and by their example act in your future life, and you will be rewarded by finding that you are thereby more fitted to be the companion of the generous and excellent young man who in a few days is to call you his wife.'

Julia's only reply was another flood of tears, and a silent pressure of her uncle's hand, as the carriage stopped, and she ran hurriedly to her room. Instantly unlocking her desk, she wrote a note to Mrs Primrose, saying that she should not require her dress on Monday, and begging as a particular favour that Miss Campbell might be allowed immediately to return to her mother's house.

The short interval between that memorable evening and the long-expected 25th found full occupation in comforting and consoling the sorrowing sisters, who now only remember it as the night on which they were made motherless. The 25th is now past, and the young bride has become a matron. As it is only some weeks since then, we cannot speak with great certainty of the result; but from the propriety, sympathy, and general consideration of her conduct, it seems evident to all that Julia finds herself a better and a more feeling-hearted woman since the trying events of that night of bargain-hunting.

CATHARINE OF RUSSIA AT HOME.

Of all historical writings, surely none is so instructive as biography; of all forms that biography can take, the autobiographical most engrosses our interest. Whether, indeed, the way in which great men or great women see themselves, approaches nearer to positive truth than that in which others see them, may be open to dispute. Their direct testimony as to their own actions and motives may be as suspicious as that of an open partisan or foe. But, *indirectly*, they needs must reveal themselves in a more authentic manner. Character will out in a thousand unsuspected ways; so that, despite all attempts at disguise, the different impression made upon us by a biography or an autobiography, is pretty much what we feel in looking at a carefully painted portrait, or at the reflection flashed for us into a mirror by the passing by of the living man himself. It is, perhaps, in the case of the notorious in evil that we best appreciate the psychological interest of the self-revelation. These characters, pilloried in history so long—by what means did they contrive to live on tolerably good terms with themselves?—by what sophistry did they excuse what we have learned so unqualifiedly to condemn? Ay, and by what gradual, scarcely conscious steps did they reach that bad eminence with which we invariably associate them? How did they view the corrupt influences that impelled them thither, the engrained evil in the whole social fabric which rendered their individual development possible? What light can they throw for us on the 'forgotten earthquakes and extinct volcanoes' that had been 'at work where that drop of discoloured water came from?'

Such thoughts as these naturally occur in connection with the memoir now before us—its authenticity seems generally admitted by competent critics—and the following is M. Herzen's account of its long suppression and present appearance. A few hours after the death of Catharine II., in 1796, her son, the unhappy Emperor Paul, had all her papers carefully sealed for his own inspection. Among them he found the famous letter of Alexis Orloff, informing the empress of the murder of her husband, and affording, by its incoherent terror and abject supplication, strong evidence of her freedom from any participation in the crime. Paul found, too, a bulky manuscript contained in a sealed envelope, and addressed to him by his mother's hand. This manuscript he religiously kept secret from all, except his boyhood's friend, Prince Alexander Kourakine, who took a copy of it. Twenty years after the assassination of Paul, two other Russian noblemen having procured copies of this document, their partial circulation came to the ears of the Emperor Nicholas, who at once gave orders for their instant suppression by the secret police; and sealing the original with the great seal of state, carefully deposited it in the imperial archives, then kept at St Petersburg. It was in 1840 that M. Herzen heard mention made of this remarkable manuscript by the tutor of the present emperor; he, Constantine Arsenieff, having been allowed to peruse it in virtue of his office as teacher of modern history to the heir-apparent. During the Crimean war, the archives were transferred to Moscow, where the emperor is known to have read his great-grandmother's autobiographical sketch. Once more a few copies began privately to circulate. It is from one of these that M. Herzen declares the work in question to have been faithfully transcribed.

It is in the year 1744 that Catharine first introduces herself as a girl of fourteen, newly arrived in Russia, as bride-elect of Peter, Duke of Holstein Gottorp, nephew and adopted heir of the reigning empress, Elizabeth. She herself was the daughter of the Prince of Anhalt Zerbst. Her mother accompanied her to Russia, and seems to have done her best to increase the discomforts of the young princess. A year and more elapsed between the betrothal and the marriage of the ill-assorted pair; and a very dreary time it appears to have been. Catharine's mother and the grand-duke were constantly squabbling, and rendering the situation of the poor *fiancée*—who tried hard, she tells us, to 'obey the one and please the other'—a 'thorny' one indeed. At this time, there existed rather a friendly feeling between the young people. They were common sufferers from the maternal temper, and used to seek solace in noisy romping games; for, precocious as Catharine's intellect was, she had a genuine love of childish play and high animal spirits. Indeed, she needed them; for besides her mother's constant fault-finding, she soon fell into disgrace with the empress on account of her lavish expenditure.

The empress had known what it was to be pinched herself in the days of her predecessor Anne; and having contrived, as she declared, to keep free of debt, she was scandalised at Catharine's reported liabilities. The latter had a good deal to urge in extenuation. She had arrived in Russia with a lamentably meagre wardrobe—had at most three or four dresses; and at the court of St Petersburg it was customary to have three changes of dress daily. Secondly, she had been informed of the national greed of presents, and knew that to indulge it was the best way to secure popularity. Thirdly, there had been placed about her person the most expensive lady in all Russia, who was always surrounded by tradesmen, and occupied in displaying their tempting stores. However, Catharine profited by the imperial hint, and forthwith set about squaring her accounts.

About this time, we find her, spite of all distractions, leading a somewhat studious life. She was diligent in acquiring Russ; she sent, on the recommendation of a learned Swede, for Plutarch's *Lives*, Montesquieu on the Roman Republic, Cicero's Life, &c., and appears to have been sincerely anxious to strengthen and cultivate her mind to the utmost. Here is her own account of herself, translated verbatim from the French, as are all the extracts we give: 'I determined to foster and respect the confidence of the grand duke, so that he should at all events look upon me as a person to be depended upon, to whom he might say anything he liked, without risk of any kind, and in this I was for a long while successful. For the rest, I treated every one as well as I could, and made it my study to gain the friendship, or, at least, to mollify the dislike of those that I even suspected to be prejudiced against me. I never shewed any partisanship, interfered with nothing, had always a serene, conciliatory aspect, was very attentive and polite to everybody, and being naturally exceedingly lively, had the satisfaction of finding that I daily won more and more upon public opinion, which pronounced me an interesting child, by no means devoid of intelligence.' Here are two other indications of character: 'I have throughout life avoided nothing so carefully as being in the way, and have always withdrawn myself the very moment that it dawned upon me that I might possibly be superfluous.' 'My self-love and self-complacency suffered in silence. I was always too proud to complain, and should have felt myself degraded by kindness that might be construed into pity. I more than ever applied myself to gaining general good-will; great or small no one was neglected by me; I made it my rule to believe that I needed them all.'

So ambitious, so calculating already, and Catharine was but fifteen! But then what an atmosphere she had been breathing for a year and a half! The wedding-day drew on. We can hardly pity her even when she tells us—'As the time drew near, I grew increasingly melancholy. My feelings did not foretell me much happiness. Ambition alone upheld me. In my secret heart I had a "je ne sais quoi," which never for a moment allowed me to doubt that, sooner or later, I should attain to be the sovereign empress of Russia in my own right.'

The wedding was magnificent, we are told, but no details are given of its barbaric splendour. The young pair at first followed the empress in her alternations between the summer palace and the winter palace, and appear to have been in both rather inconveniently lodged. The Princess of Anhalt Zerbst left her daughter in the course of the autumn, and was sincerely regretted by her. There must have been some sense of home conferred even by those familiar scoldings. Catharine's situation grew more and more isolated. Her favourite maid of honour was dismissed; suspicion seemed to fall on every one that she preferred. Her husband neglected her from the first; and agreeably to the habit of unlimited confidence which as we have seen she piqued herself on fostering, entertained her with accounts of his admiration now for this lady, now for that. Happiness for her was out of the question. How then to be least unhappy? Catharine reasoned as follows: 'I said to myself that with such a man as this I could not fail to be miserable if I gave way to any feelings of tenderness for him, only to have them thus repaid; that so I might very soon expire with jealousy, without doing any one good. I strove accordingly, by force of due *amour propre*, to avoid being jealous of a husband who did not love me; but in order not to be jealous, the only way was not to love him either. If he had chosen to be loved, I should not have found it a difficult task, for I was naturally inclined as well as accustomed to do my duty; but then I ought to have had a husband gifted with common sense, and certainly this man was not so.'

Decidedly not; all his amusements were absurd and inconsiderate in the extreme. We find him getting into a great scrape with his aunt by drilling holes in a door which divided one of his apartments from her private dining-room, and then inviting the grand duchess's maids of honour to come and peep at unsuspecting royalty enjoying its repast. Catharine, with a sense and good feeling which do her honour, absolutely declined to look at the raree-show thus provided, and warned her foolish spouse of the anger that the discovery would entail. Not very long after this cause of offence, the empress appointed a certain Madame Tchoglokoff duenna-in-chief to the grand duchess, this lady being looked upon as a pattern of domestic virtue, and likely to exercise a favourable influence in bringing the young pair into happier mutual relations. A tiresome companion she must have proved with her incessant comments upon the merest trifle said of: 'This would displease her majesty'—'That would hardly be approved by the empress.' However, Catharine, with her imperturbable good-humour, would turn a deaf ear, or feign to sleep; and ere very long, Madame Tchoglokoff fell under the empire a strong mind always has over a weak one.

Wherever Elizabeth went, her nephew and niece had to accompany her. 'Our manner of travelling to Revel,' the grand duchess relates, 'was neither agreeable nor convenient. I remember, during this journey, having one day to dress close to an oven where bread had just been baking; and on another occasion, my bed had been put up in a tent which was instep-deep in water. Moreover, the empress having no fixed hour for departure or arrival, for taking meals or taking rest, we were all, masters and servants alike, strangely harassed.'

Returned to St Petersburg, Catharine was informed of the death of her father, which appears to have sincerely distressed her. 'For a week,' she says, 'I was allowed to weep as much as I liked; but at its close Madame Tchoglokoff came to tell me I had shed tears enough, and that the empress commanded me to leave off—my father not having been a king. I replied that it was indeed true that he was not a king; to which she rejoined, that it was unbecoming in a grand duchess to weep longer for a father who was not royal. Finally, it was decreed that I should go out on the following Sunday, and wear mourning six weeks.'

Here are two specimens of the grand duke's absurd amusements, and of the patience with which his clever young wife bore with them. On their return to the summer palace, Madame Krouse, once a severe Argus herself, proved ready to connive at anything, for the pleasure of circumventing and spiting Madame Tchoglokoff, the Argus-in-chief. This is Catharine's account: 'She (Madame Krouse) procured for the grand duke toys, dolls, and other child's playthings, for which he had a perfect mania. During the day, these were concealed in and under my bed; after supper, the grand duke retired first, and as soon as we were in bed, Madame Krouse locked the door, and then he would play with these toys till one or two in the morning. Whether I liked it or not, I was obliged to take a part in this fine diversion, and so was Madame Krouse. I often laughed during it, but still more often I was weary, and even uncomfortable, all the bed being covered and filled with dolls and heavy playthings. I do not know if Madame Tchoglokoff got to hear of these nocturnal amusements; but one night, about twelve o'clock, she came and knocked at our door. It could not be opened at once, because the grand duke, Madame Krouse, and I were hard at work removing and concealing the toys, which we did pretty effectually under the counterpane. When this was accomplished, she was admitted; but she found great fault with having been kept waiting, and told us the empress would be very angry when she heard that we were still awake.'

But dolls were inoffensive compared to other hobbies of the imbecile Peter, and Catharine's toleration had to be put to a still harder test.

'In order to increase his winter amusements, the grand duke had seven or eight sporting-dogs brought from the country, and placed behind a wooden partition which separated the alcove of my bedroom from an immense vestibule at the back of our apartments. As the alcove was only boarded, the smell of the kennel pervaded it, and we had to sleep in that tainted atmosphere. If I complained, he told me that there was no other way of managing it. This kennel being a profound secret, I bore the discomfort without betraying his imperial highness.'

One of the many moves of the young couple was to a small country-house at Gostilitza, hastily and perilously built late in autumn, upon a frozen foundation, which the spring thaw undermined, and the whole fabric gave way, to the great peril of its inhabitants. In the midst of her natural terror, Catharine shewed much presence of mind and thoughtfulness; but the unreasonable empress was offended with her alarm, and chose to see no cause for it in a falling house. At this period, the grand duchess does not seem to have had one friend to love or trust. She was not allowed to write to her mother, and could only keep up a fugitive correspondence with her by a series of stratagems all involving danger.

After the Gostilitza catastrophe, Oranienbaum became a favourite summer retreat. The following is Catharine's account of her manner of life there. 'I rose at three in the morning, and dressed myself from top to toe in men's clothes: an old sportsman was ready waiting for me. We crossed the garden on foot, shouldering our guns. A skiff was in attendance at the shore; and then he, I, a pointer, and the fisherman who was to row us, got into the skiff; and I went to shoot wild-ducks amongst the reeds that border the shore on each side of the canal of Oranienbaum. At ten o'clock, or sometimes later, I went back, and dressed for dinner. After dinner, we took a rest; and in the evening the grand duke had music, or else we rode. I remember reading about this time Brantome's memoirs, which much amused me.' On her return to Moscow, Catharine applied herself—through sheer ennui—to severer studies. She waded through nine quarto volumes of German history, at the rate of one volume a week, and then read Plato's works; but her philosophy must have been sorely jarred by her proximity to her husband's apartments, who had now a fancy not only for keeping, but training dogs. His brutal shouts, and the poor creatures' lamentable howls, disturbed her morning, noon, and night. By way of interlude, he would sometimes take up his violin, and scrape it furiously, and then return to his cruel discipline. One day, when a pretty little King Charles's spaniel was the victim, Catharine, moved by its prolonged and piteous howling, ventured to intercede, but that only brought down redoubled blows. 'As a general rule,' she says, 'tears and cries, instead of moving the grand duke, increased his rage. Pity was to him an unpleasant, nay, an intolerable sensation.'

A sharp attack of illness which came upon Catharine at Pérora, seems to have done much in softening Madame Tchoglokoff towards her; indeed, according to her own account, however prejudiced her attendants might at first be, the young grand duchess never failed finally to conciliate and attach them to herself. 'They never,' she writes with excusable self-complacency, 'found me sulky or exacting, but invariably ready to meet the slightest advance on their parts; and here my lively nature stood me in good stead, for none of these Arguses could help being amused by the things I said to them, and gradually they relaxed their severity.'

As might be expected from his love of stimulants, the grand duke went on from one degree of brutality to another. We have before heard Catharine allude to his evanescent preferences for different ladies of the court, and to the imperturbable good temper with which she listened to his confidences on this critical head. But when he became infatuated about the Princess of Courlande, who was positively deformed in person, and who had besides too much of Catharine's own skilful tact in courting and gaining universal popularity to have been a favourite of hers even if she had not been a rival, the grand duchess was at last seriously provoked. 'My vanity and self-love began to be shocked at the preference being given to that little monster. One evening, as I rose from table, Madame Vladislava told me that every one was horrified to see a hump-back preferred to me. I replied: "How help it!" The tears came into my eyes, and I went to bed. I was hardly asleep when the grand duke came to bed too; as he was drunk and did not know what he was doing, he began to discourse to me about the charms of his lady fair. I pretended to be fast asleep, that he might the sooner hold his peace; but after having talked more loudly still, in order to wake me up, and finding that I made no sign of waking, he gave me two or three hard blows on the side, grumbling at my sound sleep, and then turned round and fell asleep himself. I cried a good deal that night about this partiality of his, the blows he had given me, and my in every way disagreeable and wearisome situation. The following morning, he appeared ashamed of himself, did not refer to what had passed, and I pretended not to have been aware of it. The last week of Lent we recommenced our devotions.'

In spite of tyrannical freaks every now and then, the Empress Elizabeth appears to have been, on the whole, attached to Catharine, and thoroughly aware of her great intellectual superiority to her boor of a nephew, of whom she often spoke in most unmeasured terms, though she attached a certain value to him as being her heir. She had long regretted Catharine's childless state; and the following passage describes her unscrupulous and inconsiderate joy when the succession to the throne appeared to her still further secured: 'About twelve o'clock on the twentieth of September 1754,' writes Catharine, 'I gave birth to a son. As soon as he was swaddled, the empress sent for her confessor, who gave the infant the name of Paul, after which she told the midwife to take the child and follow her. I remained on my bed of suffering. Now, this bed was placed opposite to a door full of chinks and crevices; behind me there were two large windows, which closed ill, and on each side, two other doors—the one leading to my dressing-room, the other to Madame Vladislava's. As soon as the empress was gone, the grand duke went away too, so did M. and Madame Schouvaloff, and for three good hours I saw no more of any of them. . . . . At length, Countess Schouvaloff returned in full-dress, and appeared shocked to find me still as she had left me. . . . . She went off at once, and I suppose sent for the midwife, who came in about half an hour, and told us that the empress was so taken up with the baby, that she had not parted with it for a moment; as for me, no one gave me a thought. This neglect was not very flattering. I was dying with thirst. At length, I was comfortably arranged; and I did not see another living soul that day, nor were any inquiries even made for me. The grand duke, for his part, was drinking with his companions, and the empress taken up with the child. In the town and the empire generally, there was great rejoicing. The following day, I began to suffer from intense rheumatic pain, and high fever set in; nevertheless, I still saw no one, and no one inquired for me. I did nothing but moan and weep. Madame Vladislava was the only person in my room; at bottom, she pitied, but could not help me. Besides which, I did not like to be pitied or to complain: my nature was too proud for it—the very idea of being unhappy was intolerable to me, and up to this time I had done all I could not to appear so.' Poor Catharine! they would not even let her see her child. No 'baby fingers, waxen touches' to heal this terrible sense of isolation and neglect. Nay, she did not dare openly to ask about him; to have shewn any anxiety would have been construed into an injurious doubt of the care taken of him by the empress. Only after six weeks was the mother permitted to look, for a few moments, upon her little son. She thought him 'very beautiful, and the sight of him gave her a degree of pleasure.' Later, she with small satisfaction, beheld him nearly killed by kindness in the imperial chamber. 'They kept him,' she writes, 'in an exceedingly warm room, swathed in flannel, lying in a cradle fitted up with the fur of the black fox, covered with an embroidered and wadded satin coverlet, and over that another of rose-coloured velvet lined with black-fox fur. I have often seen him lying thus, the perspiration streaming down his face and limbs, which so relaxed him that when he grew older, the least breath of air gave him cold.'

Catharine's memoirs break off abruptly a few months before the death of the empress. The Schouvaloffs, the reigning court-favourites, had done what they could to injure her in the estimation of her imperial aunt, but the tact and policy of the grand duchess prevailed. Two or three times, in the course of her narrative, we find glimpses of a certain desire for the nation's good, that had grown up even in the midst of her corrupt court-life, and which prepare us for the brighter portions of her after-career. It was but little indeed that Catharine could know of the people. As Herzen well remarks: 'The winter palace, with its administrative and military machinery, was a separate world in itself. Like a vessel floating on the surface of the deep, its only real relation to the inhabitants of that deep consisted in devouring them.'

It speaks well for the original goodness of Catharine's heart that, despite all hardening influences, it should retain its sympathies for the masses, crushed, barbarous, and proscribed as they were; and amidst the excitement of war, and the intrigues of court-life, remember to ameliorate the condition of the serf, and provide for the instruction of his children. We lay down her memoirs gladly, for we are weary of the hollow, unprincipled, unreal life they reveal; but we lay them down with a deepened conviction that 'none are all evil,' and a disposition to retain, as our prominent impression of this once bright and beautiful, this great, but most unhappy woman, that she was beloved in life, and wept in death as the 'mother of her people.'

OUR SCHOOLS *VERSUS* OUR CIVIL SERVICE.

I WAS the head-boy at Pobbles's. (Pobbles, every one knows, is head-master of the Dufferton grammar-school.) At Pobbles's I went through the various stages of dirty little, pugnacious middle-aged, and patronising old boy. The result of my youthful experiences need not be recorded here. My age was tender, my lessons tough. Pobbles, I suppose, in compassion for my tender age, administered chastisement with uncalled-for generosity, and, as I wickedly imagined, felt increased pleasure at the increase of my lamentations. At last I became 'too deep for tears.' I tried the various recipes for imparting to the hand—not a delicate softness, but an impenetrable hardness; and while seeking to rob sorrow—in other words, the cane—of its sting, I spent a small fortune at the chemist's in the purchase of alum. This failing, I resolved to avoid punishment by doing my school-work, and it is with pride I record the result. I carried off the Trotter scholarship as the best classic, besides several other prizes, given, as I then thought, by Pobbles, but, as I afterwards learned, paid for by our respective parents. One thing Pobbles did pay for—that was the paragraph in the *Dufferton Mercury* recording my success. I wrote, in the innocence of my heart, to thank the editor, who sent me in return the terms of subscription to that intelligent journal.

My parents thought of sending me to college; but they took counsel of their purse, which was not very full, and of my rich uncle, who did not seem to appreciate that mark of respect. He did not care to make any pecuniary advance on the security of my future success. Pobbles assured him that the security was undeniable, whereupon my uncle invited him to invest his money in it. My uncle added—for, in the matter of advice, he was truly generous—that he thought trade was my proper sphere in life; and he concluded with expressing his sentiments on schoolmasters in general, which, if they were intended as a compliment to Pobbles, did not, in my opinion, achieve their object.

College was therefore abandoned, and trade must have been my dole, had not our county member procured me what my mother rashly designated as a 'government appointment.' It was a nomination to compete with nine other gentlemen for three vacant situations in the office of the Comptroller-general of Sealing-wax. I may as well state what my acquirements were. I was a good classical scholar. Latin and Greek were familiar in my mouth as songs to the lark. I had a fair knowledge of Euclid, and a faint idea of trigonometry. I had learned a good deal of ancient history, and geography, and a very little modern. I was on terms of personal intimacy with all the gods and goddesses; but my acquaintance with more unremote heroes was slight in the extreme. In my fourth-form days, I had learned the rudiments of arithmetic, and having got as far as Practice, ceased; it never made me perfect. This was my intellectual condition when the summons arrived.

With some degree of confidence, inspired by my former triumphs, I presented myself at the place of examination on the appointed day. Under an archway, up some steps, and through a glass door, I was ushered, or rather followed the laconic directions of the porter, into a large room, wherein sat my opponents in the coming struggle. I was aghast. Instead of nine, there rather seemed to be twenty-nine. My first impulse was to offer a respectful but earnest remonstrance to a votary of the cherub Contemplation who was in the lobby. I afterwards discovered, however, that all of those who met my astonished gaze were not destined to compete with me; and, secondly, that the contemplative one's recreation—I can hardly say business—extended no further than to control the supply of sherry and sandwiches, which were wound up in a basket for the refreshment of some officials up stairs. I remained in this room endeavouring to look as if I was unaware of the contrast presented by my clothes—the work of the Dufferton *schneider*—with those reposing on the elegant forms of some of my neighbours, until we were all ushered, up stairs, into the intellectual dissecting-room, where the examination was to take place. There, tables, covered with red baize, stood facing one another up and down the room, like couples in a long country-dance; and after some degree of difficulty, and not without feeling that it might be a work of supererogation to divulge my name (as I had to do) I found my allotted place. There lay my first paper, resting on a cushion of blotting-paper, on which were inscribed the hopes and fears of many previous candidates, with initial indications of their names, together with some sketches of the examiners and illustrative remarks upon them, in some cases the reverse of respectful. The first paper was on arithmetic. I looked through it with mingled feelings of astonishment and indignation; I felt disposed to inquire of the examiners what possible advantage would accrue to the Sealing-wax Office from the most accurate knowledge of the number of fathoms in a mile, or miles in a fathom, as the case might be; nor could I imagine what possible circumstances could practically appeal to the Rule of Three, which always appears to me an ingenious puzzle to those who can work it, and a superfluous torment to those who cannot. I could not imagine this, and, what was worse, I could not do the sums. However, I attacked the questions, with a noble independence of rule, and so answered about half the paper correctly. In the afternoon there were exercises designed to test the handwriting; and mine, as the printer knows, is more elegant than distinct. In fact, owing to the anxiety under which I laboured, it was on this occasion absolutely hieroglyphical, and must have given the examiners very considerable trouble. So much for the first day, the close of which found me still hopeful, but rather reluctant to look back upon my arithmetical performances. On the following days, I had to grapple with other and more deadly foes. A paper on English history caused my faculties entirely to collapse. Questions met my astonished eye with reference to the lives of worthies whose very names were strange to me. I was asked my views with reference to the political state of England in the year 1700; and as I was utterly ignorant as to what monarch was then reigning, or who were his ministers, my observation that 'England was then on the verge of great political troubles; that a war was impending; that our colonies were menaced abroad, while at home we were disquieted with intestine commotions,' was perhaps a little too general. I also took a general view of the character of Lord Somers, whom, with beautiful simplicity, I described as 'a great constitutional lawyer;' adding, with a Shakspearian research, which I hope was appreciated, that he was one of the 'peers of England, pillars of the state.' My sole acquaintance with Lord Somers in reality arose from the fact that he, together with Magna Charta, form the principle staple of Lord John Russell's speeches; but while upon this subject, I feel it due to myself to state that I was not the person who described Hampden as a 'celebrated architect, who built Hampden Court Palace.'

I had scarcely recovered from the fit of helplessness induced by the historical questions, when I was again annihilated by a paper on geography. My whole stock of geographical information consisted of a vague idea of my native land, and the faintest glimmerings of knowledge of the positions of other European countries. With reference to the other continents, I knew absolutely nothing. I therefore did not descend to minutiæ; but when asked to describe the position of Paris in relation to Vienna, I contented myself with affirming that'' Paris was in France'—an assertion which I believe defies contradiction. An attempt to inveigle me into an account of the course of the Tagus was altogether unsuccessful. Nor can I flatter myself that the examiners derived any satisfaction from my attempts to inscribe on a map of Europe its capes, seas, headlands, and chief towns; the only result of my efforts being a gigantic blot, and a rash attempt to approximate to the position of Gibraltar and the Land's End.

Suffice it to say, I left town at the end of a week, depressed and bewildered, with this question ever revolving in my head: Was Pobbles right in his system of education, or were the commissioners right in their plan of examination? I am not in a frame of mind to decide with befitting calmness upon whom the blame is chargeable. I will only ask this: If certain acquirements are necessary for official usefulness, why do our schools and universities exclude them from their schools and lecture-rooms? Little or no arithmetic, history, or geography is taught at our public schools; little else is required in the examination for our public offices. Let there be some understanding arrived at, and if the service will not yield, why, then, the schools must.

A DAY WITH THE GOORKHAS.

Picture to yourself a boundless plain, relieved by low sweeps of upland, like the broad surface of ocean undulated by a gentle swell. Scatter over this plain at intervals clumps of trees—among others, the dark-green mango and the light, graceful bamboo; plant a village here and there, long, dark, dingy, irregular, and deserted; cover a greater part of the soil with crops of barley and other grains; add a few dry, sterile ravines, with banks of hard, red-coloured clay; let a small river—small now, though swollen into a broad and mighty stream in the rainy season—flow sluggishly through the plain, sweeping, in sinuous curves, like a snake, through banks of sand

and mud, and throwing out on either side large *churs* (plains) of sand—and you will have before your eye a portion of Southern Oude.

On this spot, on a bend of the stream, was encamped, in the spring of 1858, the greater part of the Nepaulese army, under the command of Maharajah Jung Bahadoor, the prime minister and commander-in-chief of Nepaul. The Maharajah himself was four miles in the rear with a division of his force, for the immense amount of camp-equipage and baggage necessitated our advance in two columns, in order to facilitate the bringing in of supplies. The previous day had brought intelligence that a large force of the enemy were in our immediate vicinity, and would attempt to dispute the passage of a nullah, over which lay our line of march. Day dawned, and found us all on the *qui vive*, with the anticipation of having a turn-up with the rebels. The little conical tents of the Goorkha force, dotting the ground like extinguishers, were soon taken down and packed into the hackaries. The bugles sounded the assembly, and, with the stir of a mighty crowd, the vast heterogeneous array moved slowly over the surface of the earth. In front were the British officers, mounted on every variety of animal, from the village *tat* (pony) to the foundered Arab, and clad in costumes more adapted to individual comfort than picturesque effect. The *sola* (pith) hat, like a gigantic mushroom perched on the top of the head, the coats of varied dye, and of shapes that would have struck despair into the heart of a Bond Street tailor, gave a novel appearance to the human form divine. Creeping up behind came the martial battalions of Nepaul, the little Goorkhas with their flat noses, round cheeks, faces like full-moons, small eyes, and big calves; but most unmartial was their look as they sauntered along without an attempt at formation, their muskets slung behind their backs, their shoes in one hand, while in the other they held a bundle of sugar-cane, gathered from the adjacent fields, which they devoured from time to time with much relish. As we advance, varying reports are brought in: the enemy are in sight; they are six miles off; they are retreating; they are advancing on our right flank. But before long, all is put beyond a doubt by the appearance of little clouds of dust, like puffs of white smoke, in our front. These are the enemy's sowars. See how the rascals career around us, now approaching within musket-shot, now flying across country till they became specks in the horizon. They are aware of our want of cavalry, and take advantage of the deficiency. The sun rides high in the heavens ere we reach the banks of the nullah where, we are informed, the rebels are intrenched. Moving through a thick grove of mango-trees, we suddenly emerge into an open plain, a couple of hundred yards beyond which is the nullah, the enemy's intrenched post. On the bank nearest us are a series of small undulations; on the right and left, trees and fields; in front, a broad plain. Crowning these miniature heights, in a long living line of mingled white and red, extending as far as eye can reach, the rebels take their stand. Pandy has got a gun in position immediately in front of us, but is reserving his fire. He is evidently in a state of indecision whether to fight or fly, and his line wavers and fluctuates like a breaking bridge. Now our guns wheel up to the front, and the Goorkhas form into line behind them. There is a pause of several minutes, and we stand gazing at each other within easy artillery-range, as if afraid or unwilling to be the first to begin. Goorkha breaks the charm. With a bang and a roar the ground shakes beneath the discharge of a dozen guns, and the huge masses of brass tremble and vibrate with the concussion. Crash go the iron messengers into the living crowd in front; they reply with their solitary gun and some smaller pieces of cannon of native manufacture. But a few more rounds from Goorkha, and the line no longer fluctuates; it is broken. Away they go pell-mell—the spot is deserted:

> It seems as if their mother-earth
> Had swallowed up her warlike birth.

The bugles ring the advance; to right, to left, and in front, disperse the Goorkhas after the flying foe. The little Tatar is in his element now, for, although plucky enough, he prefers the back to the face of a foe. His love of plunder is greater than his lust for battle, and now booty lies before him. Amid this scene of confusion, you gaze vacantly about, not exactly knowing what to do, or where to go. A horseman gallops rapidly up, covered with dust, and panting with excitement. 'The enemy! there they are—there!'

'The deuce! Where?'

He indicates with his dexter finger a huge column of dust sweeping over the plain.

Had you been Argus with his hundred eyes, it would have required the aid of all those optics to enable you to distinguish anything human amid that whirlwind of pulverised earth. But with a wild shout, you gallop in the direction indicated, guided more by instinct than any definite design or plan, and pass over, in your mad career, a maze of chasms or gaps in the earth, over which no human being in his sober senses would have attempted a pathway. 'Ping,' 'ping' go the bullets, unpleasantly close to your ear—not from foe, but from friend, for the little Goorkha has a wild and original method of firing off his musket at half-minute intervals, and as he is not guided by the strict rules of modern warfare, which teach us to reserve our fire for the enemy alone, scatters his ammunition into middle air with equal damage to both parties. Suddenly, the perpendicular banks of the nullah bring you to a dead-lock; its sides sink 'abrupt and sheer' into the shallow, sluggish water below. Its opposite bank is covered with thick, low scrub, which extends over the plain in front for several miles. Hark! a confused shout, mingled with fierce yells and the rattle of musketry. On come the enemy at top speed; they are making for the nullah; their plan is to cross that, and make for the cover beyond. Over the bank, hurrying like driven cattle, go the red-coated sepoys, running for bare life, their faces keenly expressing their fears, their clothes torn and dusty, and saturated with perspiration. Down they go, and at their heels, true to the scent of blood, come the Goorkhas, their eyes gleaming and flashing ferocity, the naked *tulwar* in one hand, the musket in the other. On go the sepoys, in scattered masses, down the side, and splash through the water beneath; but many fall ere they reach the opposite bank. With a sullen crash, one huge brawny fellow, just as he had gained a footing on the bank, tumbles back into the ravine below, with a bullet through his body. His form sways and works convulsively for a minute, his face is upturned in the death-agony, and then stiffens into rigidity as life quits its earthly tenement. There, that fellow has escaped; see, he tops the bank and breaks into a run to gain the jungle beyond; that reached, his safety is secured. It is a desperate game; but he may be a winner yet. The messenger of death wings its way, swift and unerring; it has reached his body, piercing it through and through like pasteboard. You can perceive the red stain on the coat—the stain of blood—brighter than the soiled scarlet. He staggers on for a few paces, and then, like a bullock in the shambles, drops to earth. A vulture, hovering over the scene, marks, with his dull and fishy eye, the spot where he fell, and gives one swoop nearer to his intended victim. The last of the enemy yet in life have crossed the ravine, and casting away their arms and dividing into scattered groups, they fly across the low jungly plain, Goorkha still in pursuit. They are pretty nearly exhausted now, and the Nepaulese cut them down by the score, rifling the bodies as they fall. See that man, he is almost spent; his heavy step and impeded breathing scarce bear him over ten feet of ground in the space of a minute; behind him runs a Goorkha with uplifted tulwar; he is gaining on him, and the sepoy turns despairingly round to behold his enemy within a few yards of him, with the weapon of death in his hand. He reads his fate in his eye—small hope of mercy there; but the desperate fatalism of his race comes to his aid in this moment, and steels his heart in place of courage—the passive valour of despair. He never turns his head again; but with an instinct which is perhaps involuntary, bends his right arm over his head, as if to avert the coming blow. The pursuer gains on the pursued. Another moment, and the blow falls; the Goorkha seldom gives a second.

The fight is won, if fight it may be called; the survivors of the rebel force have fled; and the Goorkhas return to camp from their feast of blood, each man richer, by many rupees, than he was in the morning. The camp is a scene of bustle, for every one has his say about the late fight. Look at that fat, greasy Nepaulese colonel, narrating to an immense audience the deeds of valour performed by him in the combat. Exaggeration is inherent in a native—it is part of the native character; but when an Asiatic is embellishing a lie, romance itself is feeble in the comparison. See how he gesticulates! He is telling the number of the enemy he slew in single combat, his many miraculous escapes, the calm determined energy with which he led on his troops—all are dilated upon with such vivacious energy of manner and seeming verity, that one unacquainted with the character of the man would really imagine that there was truth at the bottom. But the Goorkha officer has ever found the well too deep, or truth too shy, to form any acquaintance with her.

In the evening, the Maharajah rode up into camp, heard the details of the combat, and smoked a cheroot with the British officers. He is pleasant and chatty, and always tries to make himself agreeable. He issued orders that the heads were to be cut off the slain, and collected together, in order to ascertain the number killed. This barbarous command was immediately carried into execution; and before evening, the severed heads of one hundred and eighty human beings were displayed on either side the road. As the force moved out the next morning, its course lay between these ghastly relics of mortality, of all ages, caste, and religion: the aged Mussulman, with his thin features and long white beard; the Hindoo, with shaven chin, broader in the face, with a neck like a bull; the thick locks of youth and the bare head of age, dark with clotted blood, with eyes fixed and stony, the death-agony still visible on the parted lips and starting eyeball—they were in truth a ghastly spectacle; and as the column swept into the open plain beyond, each heart beat freer as the grim *étalage* passed from the sight.

SCIENCE IN TIPPERARY FIVE-AND-TWENTY YEARS SINCE.

No person who lived in Ireland in the year 1832 can forget the strange scenes which were enacted at that time; but how the tithe-war commenced, or by whom it was encouraged, would be a discussion quite foreign from the present purpose, which is merely to detail what happened to myself and some friends on one occasion in those disturbed times. Having spent most of my life in the country, I could appreciate the many amiable qualities of the peasantry, and make due allowance for the readiness with which they entered into any combination which they imagined held out a prospect of bettering a condition sufficiently hard. Naturally impetuous, their passions were easily excited; and naturally credulous, it was an easy task to teach them to look on those as enemies, who were in truth and charity their friends.

My professional avocations prevented my taking any part in the politics of the day—my time being fully occupied in the pursuits and studies which belong to engineering—so that I was merely a spectator of all that passed. The shouting, and hooting, and shrill whistling of assembled multitudes could not, however, fail at times to produce an effect upon my mind. Attracted by the wild sounds, I have often gone out and stood for two hours admiring the lights upon the neighbouring mountains, bursting out suddenly through the shades of night, sparkling and gleaming as they studded the heights, or fitfully glittering like stars through the wooded nooks. These illuminations were meant to celebrate some advantage which the peasants believed to have been achieved by their operations against the collection of tithe. Often these successes were of a most insignificant nature, or even purely imaginary. It frequently happened that for miles round fires were blazing, the cause of whose lighting-up was quite unknown; the hint was taken from some distant point where the first signal-fire appeared, and it was communicated with the swiftness of an electric spark from spot to spot, till whole districts and counties blazed with the portentous fires. The morning after, groups might be seen questioning each other, and conjecturing what the event might be which they had been celebrating the night before. To those who were mere spectators of these scenes, they were beautiful; but to those who felt that such involved their fate, they were truly awful.

It was about this period that I became deeply interested in the study of geology; and as it was a science which engrossed the attention of my brother-in-law, and of a friendly neighbour of his, who now occupies the chair of a professor of geology, we kept up a regular correspondence on the subject. It occurred to me, that, as the long vacation was coming on, we might have a delightful party if these two and my brother-in-law's wife would come to Tipperary on a visit to us. An invitation was despatched, and accepted, places secured in one of the public coaches, and the day fixed for their arrival. The professor and my brother-in-law were all eagerness for the geological research, for which my neighbourhood afforded so fine a field. My brother-in-law's wife, Mrs Sterling, was an Englishwoman, and we were glad that the fineness of the season would set off our place to the greatest advantage on this her first visit. My wife and I had thought it right to give her some idea of the excited state of the country; but this gave her but little uneasiness, as she concluded us to be alarmists, and gave us credit for the imaginative powers with which the English believe us to be so largely endowed, and so made all due allowance for exaggeration.

It was towards the close of a lovely evening in July when our guests arrived; everything looked fresh and beautiful, and, after the dust and heat of Dublin, they greatly enjoyed themselves. The air, fragrant with the new-mown hay, and the perfume of flowers wafted from the parterres beneath the windows, was indeed refreshing. My sister-in-law was delighted with the country through which they had passed, wild and uncultivated as it was, but commanding extensive mountain views, and enlivened by many a gushing torrent and winding stream; and as she declared herself charmed with my rustic abode, she moved from window to window, to take in the different points of view; wherein the heath-clad mountains, indeed, formed a fine contrast with the fertile valleys, rich in pasture-lands and fields of waving corn.

Before seven o'clock the next morning, we had despatched breakfast, and the jaunting-car was at the door to convey us to the little inn at the foot of Galtimore, where we were to leave the horse and car, while we ascended the mountain to pursue our geological operations. Galtimore is the highest of the picturesque range of the Galtees. The wild magnificence of the scenery, with its fine outline of varied elevations, its sequestered glens, and its lakes, makes this mountain-range rank among the finest in Ireland. My wife, who is somewhat of an anxious turn, said something about our taking care of ourselves; my sister-in-law smiled at the injunction, as if incredulous of a necessity for such a caution; indeed, a significant glance often passed between her and her husband, when we mentioned a report of some recent outrage connected with the excitement which prevailed. 'Wait till you see a lighting up,' said my wife, half-affronted by their incredulity.

'I hope we shall have one soon,' said I. 'I should like, of all things, that you should see a real Munster lighting: you would indeed see what you would not be likely to forget.'

'You ought to get up one for our special amusement,' said the professor.

'For my part,' interrupted my brother-in-law, 'I shall be quite affronted if you do not.'

'On the word of a gentleman, I promise you,' returned I. As we were not to be home till a very late hour to dinner, my wife, ever on hospitable thoughts intent, would have prepared a pile of sandwiches enough to supply a company of hungry grenadiers, had I not stayed her hand. 'We'll not be *behoulden* to you,' said I, speaking after the fashion of my country—'we'll not be *behoulden* to you.'

'You know,' said she, 'you have not been well, and you must promise to take some refreshment on the way.'

'The best that Tipperary can afford,' I answered, making a mock bow. The required promise having been thus given, we mounted the jaunting-car. The distance was some miles, and as our way lay through rugged roads, our speed did not foreshadow that of railway travelling. The retirement of the byways through which we passed made a vehicle containing three passengers a novel sight; and men would rest on their spades from their work, and women and children would rush to the doors of the cabins, looking after us with mingled admiration and curiosity, as long as we continued in sight. After three hours' jolting and rumbling, we found ourselves at the house of entertainment, where man and beast were to be refreshed. It is a humble edifice, situated under the brow of the mountain: a hawthorn in front, grown almost to the size of a forest-tree, is encircled by a rustic seat, and the pleasant shade lures many a weary traveller to rest himself. Judicious was the landlord who constructed this outward mark of hospitality; for here can be contemplated at leisure the goodly array of pipes, glasses, and jugs, temptingly ranged along the window, and so irresistible to those under the pressure of heat and dust. When we stopped at this homely little inn, the whole establishment poured out to welcome us, mine host in all his portly importance holding the prominent place of leader, while his countenance beamed with a welcome which bespoke universal philanthropy and the best of good cheer. His buxom dame courtesied and simpered with imperturbable suavity; while poor Boots, who, for lack of his own proper employment, had palpably addicted himself to the pastime of catching flies, stood with his mouth invitingly open to receive whatever might wish or chance to turn in. The groom, scratching his head, eyed my horse askance, as if he never had seen or heard of such an animal before; and I verily believe that poor Trusty might have remained under his burden to this moment, had not the landlord succeeded in rousing the groom from his reverie, and induced him to unharness the poor beast. Some half-dozen of ragged boys had collected, and were scrambling and jostling each other in pressing forward to busy themselves in our service. However, the timely administration of the landlord's switch, accompanied by a few incidental curses, suspended the energetic operations, and from being actors, the boys became mere spectators. When lunch was proposed, it was evident that we had but to order every delicacy in and out of season, and that it would be forthcoming; nay, that our enthusiastic landlord would have flown to the antipodes to provide what might have been acceptable, had he been blessed with wings, or had there been any available mode of transporting himself thither. When the illusions of his ardent imagination gradually subsided, a more matter-of-fact statement was submitted to us, and all the promised dainties had resolved themselves into rashers of bacon, eggs, and potatoes, which were ordered to be in readiness for us on our return. The boys, who had 'encumbered us with superfluous aid,' followed our track along the mountain path. Though the ascent was fatiguing, toil was well repaid by a scene of loveliness; the extensive prospect, the wild mountain-passes, and the rills that gushed and sparkled among the rocks, might well have made the lover of the picturesque to linger there for hours. The botanist, too, might have pursued his delightful task through the long day among the multitude of buds and blossoms which enamelled the soft turf, and crept along the rocks; but we were more intent on the scientific pursuit which had brought us there; and we set ourselves earnestly to work in examining the soil and rocks, and entering our observations in our note-books. So completely were we absorbed in what we were about, that we little heeded the shrill whistling of the boys who had followed our steps, or anything which was passing around us, till our attention was attracted by the word *Sasanach*, which was repeated again and again. On looking up, we perceived a number of men gathered about us, and I had no doubt of their having been called together by the shrill whistles which we had scarcely minded. Their wild bearing, and looks of suspicion, as they surveyed us, seemed to bode us no good, and Sasanach was again repeated. 'Don't we know the Englified talk,' said one, addressing the rest—'don't we know the Englified talk. *Mica* indeed! as if Mickle wasn't the man's name. Mica indeed!'

'Mr Nowlan,' said one among them, 'you have a dale of book-larnin', and understands the multiplication-table, and has a sight of dictionary words, and, moreover, is used to taichin' the childer that goes to your school; and there isn't one here that's fitter to circumnavigate the business of them chaps; so, if you plaise, make it out from them; and if it is what we consave, we'll do ours, bedad.'

After a little whispering, while they looked at us with increased earnestness, as we went on, affecting to be unobservant of their remarks, 'Pray, gentlemen,' said one of them, advancing from among the rest, 'may I be so bould as to ask what you are—that is, what is the nature of the business that you follow?'

'We are geologists,' replied Sterling.

'Soft and aisy,' returned the questioner; 'if you plaise, don't answer us in Frinch; for though I'm come of most respectable people—the Nowlans of Carricharilagh—and have a dale of book-larnin'—

multiplication, and the rule of three, and division to the hiat of perfection, and syllables without end, that makes the youngsters shudder in their skins—I haven't taken to the Frinch—that is, I'd rather be answered in Irish or English. What's the business that brings you to the top of a blake mountain in Tipperary; and what is it brings you all this way to pick stones?'

We again repeated that we were geologists, from Dublin, and endeavoured to explain what we were about.

'We ain't hathens,' returned he, 'and don't understand such out-of-the-way talk. Don't tell me you're come all the ways from Dublin to pick stones on the side of a blake mountain: the likes of that was never heard since the world was a world. If you wanted stones, I blive you'd be at no loss in Dublin, where there's a sight of stone-walls, not to spake of the pavements of the streets; and, moreover, we don't like this rootin' in the clay; and what's more, it shan't be done, and we're Tipperary boys that says it, and that's enough; so hand us them books.' We assured them they would not be able to understand our notes. 'None of your palaver, if you plaise: them books we'll have. No tithe-proctors shall set a foot on Galtimore, makin' out processes; so give them books.'

The crowd pressed closer, and we had now no choice but to give up our notes; but it was not without the hope that when the learned Mr Nowlan had glanced over them, and found nothing which he could consider objectionable, he would restore them. He put on his spectacles, and appeared a good deal puzzled as he looked over the sheets; he took off his glasses several times, and wiped them, and put them on again, muttering to himself:

'The likes of these words I never seen—they must be Frinch; for if they wern't, I'd be the one that would make them out; and with or without the spectacles, that's what I can't do; it fairly goes beyant the beyants. Faith, here's a word that's aisy enough—*quartz*. So there's a gauger amongst you. Quartz must have its mainin'; it's made out to our parfact satisfaction. You're tithe-proctors, and a gauger's among you—and we don't like kith or kin belongin' to aither; so the sooner we come to a right understandin' the better. So, now, boys, here's the books.'

There was a general shout, which rent the air for some moments. The books were eagerly snatched. We were overpowered by numbers, and actually compelled to—eat our note-books, while held in the iron grasp of these fierce men, who did not loosen their hold till the last morsel had disappeared.

'Now, boys, give three cheers for the gentlemen; and we promise them it's not paper we'll trate them to the next time they come manœuvrin' on Galtimore, but we'll give them a taste of the stones that they seem so fond of; so never set foot upon that same hill again, the longest day you live.'

I need not say that we were glad when we found ourselves on the jaunting-car again, pursuing our way homewards. All inclination for the rashers and eggs was gone. We agreed that we would keep secret an adventure which had so much of the ridiculous. There was nothing of the grand or heroic as a set-off against our discomfiture; besides, we knew the ladies would be nervous, were they to know what we had encountered.

'I hope you did not forget your promise,' said my wife, as we entered the house. 'I hope you took something.'

'Oh, quite enough, I assure you.'

We had indeed taken enough. The scene through which we had passed, and the unpalatable meal which had been forced on us, had completely sickened us; and not one of us could taste a morsel of dinner.

'We can't let you go to Galtimore again,' said Mrs Sterling, 'if you make your dinner there, and can't partake of ours.'

My friends and I often exchanged glances during these remarks, nor could we suppress a smile. But our gravity was quite upset when my wife said:

'Well, here is something which I know you will all like: some *côtelettes en papillote*. I had them prepared on purpose for you.'

Notwithstanding what we had suffered, we all burst into a hearty laugh; and to account for the impoliteness, had to confess all. My wife and sister-in-law were greatly agitated, and wept bitterly to think of the danger to which we had been exposed; indeed, my poor wife felt so much, that her spirits did not get up till the close of the evening, when, happening to look out of the window, she exclaimed: 'A lighting-up, a lighting-up!' We were all out on the steps in a moment, and saw the fires starting up, as if by magic, as far as the eye could reach, till hill and valley were studded with countless stars. Around the fires, in the near grounds, we could discern dark figures moving and gesticulating, while their loud shouts of exultation were echoed in the distance. We stayed long admiring the sight, and sent out the next morning for James the gardener, to inquire what the rejoicing had been for.

'I'm tould,' said he, 'the raison was because the boys at Galtimore were after huntin' the tithe-proctors and gaugers off the mountain, and they never let them go till they made them ate every taste of their processes.'

'Well, my friends,' said I, 'among all the chances of the day, you must all acknowledge that I am a man of my word. I kept the promise which I made to you, my dear,' said I, turning to my wife. 'I did not come home without having taken something; and I believe the promise which I gave—to do what I could to have a lighting-up—has been redeemed; and that none of you will ever forget a Munster lighting!'

VOICE AND SPEECH.

It will doubtless be remembered with what gratitude the stammering Oxford student in *What will he do with it?* regards the author of his cure. Never before perhaps in any fiction has the defect of utterance been used so powerfully to excite our pity, never before have the evils of what many are accustomed to look upon as a light misfortune, been so skilfully exhibited. A young man burning with zeal for the ministry—adapted in every respect for a profession to which very few have, in reality, any call—is prevented from becoming either preacher or exhorter, on account of an impediment in his speech.

The method of his amateur-physician, Gentleman *Waif*, appears, from the scientific work* now before us, to have been somewhat simpler than that of the best professional teachers of the art of speech. Each particular stammer or stutter—for they are by no means the same things—requires a particular treatment, and no permanent advantage seems likely to be gained unless it is resolutely persevered in for at least a year. The technical descriptions of 'the Vocal Apparatus,' 'the Organs of Articulation,' and other learned matters to which Mr Hunt's volume refers, are scarcely palatable to the general reader; but 'islanded amid this waste' of science, there are many interesting anecdotes, and much practical good advice which is applicable to all. It will be new to many persons, who have 'always thought that dumb creatures understood one another;' who are aware that the cock has a different cry for announcing the morning, for his love-speech, and for his shout of victory; that the cries of the hen after laying differ from those when her brood is hatched, and again from those she emits when her progeny are in danger—to hear that some have made these animal noises their peculiar study. 'Dupont, a French author, who has spent many years in studying the languages of animals, asserted that he understood twelve words—if so they may be called—of the vocabulary of pigeons; twelve of that of common fowls; twenty-two words of cattle-language; thirteen of dog-language; fourteen of cat-language; while he believed that he completely understood the language of rooks.'

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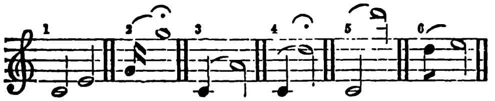
* *A Manual of the Philosophy of Voice and Speech.* By James Hunt. Longmans.

Again, among human beings, it is certain that the inarticulate cry of pain is not uniformly the same, but indeed so different that, from the nature of it, the peculiar character and seat of the disease may sometimes be predicted. Broussais has observed that every suffering organ has its own peculiar cry, and Colombat has even given a notation of cries arising from various pains, which is worth quoting for its singularity, if not for its accuracy:



No. 1. Expresses the cry caused by the application of the actual cautery, or from burning.
" 2. The cry from the application of the knife in surgical operations.
" 3. The cry proceeding from violent emotion.
" 4. The cry caused by sudden danger.
" 5. The cry in parturition.
" 6. The cry of joy.

A very tolerable articulation appears to be possessed by many creatures beside ourselves, in spite of the Greek poet's definition of us. A certain ash-coloured parrot (*Psittacus erythacus*), purchased in 1500 by a cardinal for a hundred gold pieces, could repeat the whole of the Apostles' Creed. Another, of a much later date, beside fetching its master's slippers when required, would call the servants, and make himself otherwise vocally useful in the house; but at sixty years of age he began to speak at random, and in rather an inebriated fashion, without much reference to the logical sequence of his remarks.

'Colonel O'Kelly's parrot, which he had purchased for one hundred guineas, possessed the most extraordinary imitative talent. This bird could sing a number of songs in perfect time and tune. She would beat time while she whistled, and if she mistook a note, would revert to the bar where the mistake occurred, and finish the tune with great accuracy. The parrot not only repeated a great number of sentences, and answered questions, but expressed her wants articulately, and gave her orders apparently in a rational manner.'

The only living depositary of the language of the Atures, who were destroyed by the Caribs, is, according to tradition, a certain old gray parrot, who speaks like Wisdom in the streets of Maypures, and no man regards, or even understands him.

In connection with the singular changes to which the voice is subject, we are informed, that Lablache, when a young lad, having tasked his voice to the utmost at a festival of the church on the previous day, found it transformed the next morning into an excellent bass; and when Grassini came to England from Italy, her voice, in consequence of the change of climate, became one octave lower. After singing for two or three seasons, her natural voice returned, but it had lost its attractions with the low notes, for which she had been principally admired.

As a set-off against much wonderful information of this sort, however, Mr Hunt destroys now and then some of our old-fashioned illusions and pleasant creeds. The ventriloquist, for example, is stripped of all the mystery with which we had invested him. He not only, it seems, does not speak from his stomach, as his title implies, any more than from his great toe, but he has not even any peculiar vocal apparatus.

'The mechanism chiefly consists of a deep inspiration, by which the lungs are filled with a large mass of air, which is gradually and slowly expired during articulation. . . . .

'The direction whence a sound proceeds is very difficult to be judged of, and, under certain circumstances, as all sportsmen know, it is almost impossible to arrive at any certainty respecting it. The ventriloquist, therefore, in most cases, by looking or listening in certain directions, himself suggests to the minds of the audience where the sound proceeds from. If, in addition, he is capable of producing variations in loudness, by rapid transitions from the chest to the falsetto notes, the illusions are more perfect. . . . .

'Every one must have observed that common ventriloquists rarely shew their front face, which is usually turned away from the audience. Great artists, however, possess the power of producing all effects without any apparent movement of their features, and look the audience in the face. When it is considered that we all can speak and sing with the jaws closed, without much disturbing the facial muscles, it is not astonishing that the practised ventriloquist, who, in shewing his face, avoids the labials *p*, *m*, *b* as much as possible, or produces them with the least apparent motion, should be successful in deceiving his audience.'

The well-known inconvenience (to the minister) which now and then prevents our hearing a sermon, called 'clergyman's sore throat,' is ascribed by Mr Hunt to the sudden transition of the vocal organ from repose to activity. Affections of the throat he finds to be less prevalent among dissenting ministers than with those of the Church of England. 'The reason of the former being more exempt, seems to be, that dissenters commence preaching when very young; their organs undergo, therefore, a proper training; they preach, also, more frequently—sometimes every day, by which all sudden transitions are avoided. Another important circumstance must also be mentioned, which is, that dissenters do not generally *read* their sermons. In reading, the head stoops, the larynx is compressed, and the free action of its muscles is impeded. The extemporaneous preacher, on the contrary, raises his head, throws back his shoulders, and thus gives the muscles of the throat fair-play. Any one who tries the experiment soon finds that half an hour's reading from a book affects his voice more than an hour's extemporaneous speaking; unless, indeed, he has by practice acquired the art of reading in such a manner that it differs but little from speaking.'

The speaking, as preachers frequently do, in an assumed tone, in order to impart solemnity to their sermons, is decidedly injurious; and similarly, nothing fatigues the voice so much as singing in an unnatural tone. The best time for what young ladies call 'practising' (the voice) is between ten and twelve in the morning, and from five to eight in the afternoon. The duration of the lessons is also of some consequence. Children should never be kept at them longer than half an hour, nor adults longer than an hour and a quarter. The pupils should practise in an erect position, and all grimaces of the mouth and face be strictly forbidden.

Loud vociferations in the open air, when walking uphill, and against the wind, are, with due caution, of great use for strengthening the voice. Children are instinctively given to vociferation; and nature, as usual, is therein the best 'Youth's Instructor.' Nothing can be more absurd than to bid children 'play quietly' and in whispers. Well and wisely says Mr Hunt, 'those who cannot bear the noise of children, in which their fun consists, are certainly not fit to be about them.' The value of loud outcries to the voice is manifest from the fact, that itinerant costermongers, street-criers, and ballad-singers, although constantly exposed to the vicissitudes of the weather, are neither liable to colds nor pulmonary affections.

Among the disorders of the voice, that of periodical or temporary dumbness seems the most eccentric and unaccountable. One young man, a German, during fourteen years, only speaks during a couple of hours a day, from noon till two o'clock. Another person, aged sixty, becomes dumb from seven to eight o'clock every morning—we confess to having been deaf, when told it is time to get up, for the same space, upon winter mornings, ourselves—and this during two months only. A girl of sixteen remains speechless for a fortnight, at regular intervals of three months. A boy of ten, who hears well, and understands what is said to him, yet never makes any attempt at articulation; but when he wishes to attract attention—in which we should think he succeeded to admiration—he contents himself with uttering a loud sharp bark, like a dog.

'Dr Gregory used, in his lectures, to mention the case of a clergyman who, while labouring under an affection of the brain, spoke nothing but Hebrew, the last language he had acquired. Dr Prichard mentions an English lady who, in recovering from an apoplectic attack, always spoke to her attendants in French, as she had actually lost the knowledge of the English language. This continued about a month.

'The celebrated Dr Broussonet lost, after a slight apoplectic attack, the power of pronouncing substantive nouns, whether in French or Latin. Thus, when he wished to pronounce apple, he described it by its qualities. When the noun was shewn to him, written or printed, he immediately recognised, but had no power to designate it spontaneously.'

A frequent modification of mutism consists in putting one name for another, but always using the words in the same sense: 'thus, a gentleman, when he wanted coals put upon the fire, always called for paper; and when he wanted paper, called for coals; and these words he always used in a similar manner.' This must be even more distressing than total dumbness, since liable to so much greater disappointments; for, fancy a man's asking for the *Record*, who wanted the *Guardian*, or recording his vote for Mr Henry Drummond, when he intended to 'go the whole animal' with Mr Bright; or *vice versâ*. This misfortune might become very serious if it took the form of writing other people's names, instead of one's own, on cheques.

Finally, Mr Hunt tells us of a certain gentleman who, by a blow on the head, 'lost his knowledge of Greek, without appearing to have lost anything else.' We know of some learned Thebans who, under the above circumstances, would find their remaining intelligence exceedingly limited.

AUTUMN RAIN.

WITH misty slant the sighing rain
Strews through the chancel-archèd lane
The scented leaves abroad;
In sodden heaps they pile the banks
Along the sodden road,
The yellow channels by its side
Stream in a twisted flood.

I love, oh, how I love the scene,
Where Death soft sorrow wears,
And nature's pent heart seems to find
Deep quiet in its tears;
To me the sight, the scent, the sound,
Clothe bones of buried years.

I love it, when at times the sun
Slants forth a lustre cold,
And the rain pauses, and a trill
Chants clear a robin bold;
When 'gainst dark misty distant trees
Gleams out scant scattered gold

Of ribbed burnt orange leaves that cling
To the smooth gray beech rind,
The deep, red raindrops at their edge
With diamond lustre lined;
Leaves that will scarly, to the Spring,
Hiss shivering in the wind.

They huddle at the damp tree foot,
Bare Winter draweth nigh,
But these are passively at rest—
It was but once to die,
Nor Winter's gripe, nor Spring's light hand,
Disturb their lethargy.

Ah! yet I envy not their fate—
When Autumn's languor fades,
And the faint emerald edge of Spring
Far tinges down the glades,
And daisies with star-silence dawn
On sleeping Winter's shades;

When hawthorn flowers pile thin black boughs
With snow-wreaths scant and stray—
A tribute gently strewn by Spring
Where the dead Winter lay—
When birch-trees slight begin to wear
Green glintings on the gray:

I 'd rather be a primrose fair,
Forth dawned from matted brown,
Whose quiet beauty dews the heart
Smoke shrivelled in the town,
Whose pale smile on a weary world
Unseams its rugged frown;

That yields its mite of life and love
To the awakening dell—
Than the fallen oak-tree, strong and brave,
That owns no loving spell,
That lies in stern and utter rest,
Unchanging, where it fell.

I. R. V.

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MY ALBUM.

Now, don't be frightened, reader, when I speak of 'My Album.' I by no means intend to inflict upon you a tormenting catalogue of halting hexameters 'On a Neglected Caterpillar,' 'Sonnets to Rosabella,' or stanzas by Dismal Dilworth on 'Our Ruined Country.' No—I always had an aversion to writing, whether on a grave or a gay subject; at school, I was the vilest penwoman in my class—and that 's asserting a great deal—and I feel quite certain that if my being married had depended on my keeping up an epistolary correspondence with my lover, I should have been to this very hour a spinster; but my needle-work—ah, there I was unsurpassed by any one of my schoolmates; and every half-year I carried home the head (or hand) prize in that department. Nothing came amiss to me, either in plain or fancy work; I was a proficient, from shirt-making to the imitation of point-lace; and now—*my album* is a patchwork quilt, whereon I see traced, as truly as though sketched with pen and paper, the characters, history, and fate of ancestors, friends, and companions. I *do* love that quilt: for many memories of days gone by, of kindnesses bestowed, of hopes, some realised, some defeated, does that party-coloured page recall.

The first article in my album is an oval of rich saffron-coloured satin, manufactured in times when no *soupçon* of cotton intruded to mar the beauty and durability of the silken fabric. Its texture is of the finest, and it is spotted with sprigs of myrtle and moss rosebuds, yet bright as when fresh from the hands of the embroideress; who, perhaps, proud as she must have been of her dainty handiwork—for the raised flowers look so natural that you are almost tempted to gather one—wondered, as she bent over the frame, why *she* should be a poor needlewoman, earning at best a hand-to-mouth subsistence, while the bride for whom she was embroidering this lovely wedding-robe, was the possessor of wealth almost unlimited, had all the luxuries of life at her command, and a coronet awaiting her acceptance. Her full-length portrait hangs in our dining-room: there she appears in her nuptial-dress—the saffron satin—a lively-looking, handsome brunette of sixteen; her hair dressed exactly in the odious, unbecoming style that is prevalent again at this very hour; her gown, open in front, is looped up at the sides with wedding favours; a white petticoat is visible through the point-lace flounces that enrich it; ruffles, stomacher, and lappets of the same expensive material, complete the dress; and the bride wears, for the first time, a brilliant suite of diamonds. All these—dress, point-lace, and diamonds—are gone long, long ago, and nought remains but the odour of good deeds, that sanctifies the memory of the just.

What a strange shape is this patch, so carefully joined to the above! Yes, it *was* a fan. Gazing on it, I am reminded of my sailor-brother, dear Lionel. A gay, bold, young midshipman, he was the first to quit us and break up our happy, loving, family circle. Laughingly, he kissed my tears away, as I essayed in vain to repress my sobs, to say farewell, and to wish him a prosperous voyage. The signal was given, 'All hands aboard;' Lionel tore himself from our embraces, and we turned tearfully away homewards; we had committed our dearest treasure to the mercy of the waves. Dear Lionel we never saw again. Letters, fraught with love and glowing anticipations of future fame in his chosen profession, came frequently during his three years' sojourn abroad; we then received one, written in the hurry and din of preparation for a return-voyage; our Lionel was coming home. His vessel sailed; anxiously, impatiently, at length frantically, we awaited him; the time had long passed by when the gallant bark should have sailed into port; dim and shadowy forebodings of evil were converted into yet more wretched certainty; official intelligence reached us that 'H.M.S. *Mozambique* had been wrecked off the coast of Cornwall, and that *all* on board had perished.'

Full twelve months after these dismal tidings, my dear brother's sea-chest, recovered, amongst other valuables, from the wreck, was forwarded to us. The sight of its contents renewed our grief afresh. At the top, carefully folded, lay the middy's smart uniform, of which our Lionel had been so proud. There were all our letters, carefully treasured up and tied together; a long golden ringlet (perhaps a love-gift), fastened with a crimson bow; there, too, was a present for each one of the family, neatly enclosed in paper, and directed; one, superscribed to 'My darling sister Ellen,' I opened: it was this fan. The moment I unfurled it, the fine Indian crape that formed its frail foundation, crumbled to pieces—fit emblem of its donor's hopes and aspirations. I transferred the fan to a groundwork of white lute-string, and placed it here in my album. The pattern is a beautiful combination of gold, bright foreign shells, and scroll-work of Indian beads, all tastefully interwoven. I cannot look on it without a feeling of melancholy, though fourteen years have elapsed since I received it; for still it forcibly recalls to my thoughts the bright-eyed sailor-boy in his watery grave, 'whose hands, so often clasped in mine, now toss with tangle and with shell.'

A gay strip of bright Stuart tartan: this is a contribution from bonny Minnie of Clydesdale. Seldom is she seen in any other than tartan dress—tartan in gown, cloak, shawl, cape. I *have* sometimes known her to wear at an evening-party, in the height of summer, white muslin, yet still in scarf or ribbon, display the venerated Stuart plaid. Ask her for a song; sweetly and unaffectedly, she will warble *Prince Charlie*, or *Scots wha hae;* or should she chance to be in a merry mood, she will give you *the Laird o' Cockpen.* Entreat her to favour you with a recitation—what a bewildering variety you have to choose from! Scott, Campbell, Burns, she has them at her tongue's-end. She knows no dances save strathspeys and reels; admires no music but the violin; envies no one, unless it be Flora Macdonald, and heartily does Minnie wish that she herself had lived at the same period as that renowned heroine. Oh, to have seen, to have conversed with, to have been of service to the Chevalier, whose memory she idolises, would have been happiness unspeakable!

Harmless enthusiast! Dear Minnie, mayst thou wed a Scottish chief, and reside in thine adored land of lake and mountain!

Grandma's contribution comes now: a specimen of the very, *very* finest India muslin, a snow-white cobweb, with showers of large golden flies entangled in its gossamer meshes! In London city, at the period when this was woven, I am told that it would have realised six or seven guineas a yard. My grandma was the eldest of a large family. They were all girls, but slenderly provided for. Grandma was handsome, and, according to the usage of the day, she, being *the* beauty of the family, was booked for the Indian market. She was forthwith consigned to an old friend, resident at Calcutta, who bargained so advantageously on her account, that in less than a fortnight after her arrival, the young lady was married to one of the wealthiest nabobs of that wealthy country. To be sure, one might have fancied he was not altogether so wonderful a bargain after all, for he was old, yellow, lean, shrivelled, and had already one-foot in the grave! Girls errant on fortune-hunting expeditions can't afford to be fastidious; the 'money-chest,' and not the 'man,' their object, it would be well if they could all meet with hearts as kindly and as generous as Sir Timothy's, who, during the few years of his wedded life, treated his blooming wife with the utmost tenderness and consideration. At his death, his young widow returned, laden with riches, to England, accompanied by her only child—my mother. I was her heiress and prime favourite. When I was fortunate enough to obtain the permission of my governess to spend the afternoon with grandma, what a treat it used to be! She was a fine, majestic old lady, rather stout, much averse to exercise, and used to recline all day long on a low couch, that was wheeled up close to the fireside. Her garb was a jumble of long robe, shawl, drapery, and beads, which somehow composed, altogether, a striking and graceful toilet. When tired of examining and playing with the innumerable articles of foreign *bijouterie* that crowded her spacious apartments, I used to seat myself on a hassock beside the couch, and listen for hours to grandma's animated descriptions of Indian manners and customs. When bedtime came, I was invariably dismissed with a present. The last I ever received from that dear hand was this piece of white and gold embossed muslin, a portion of *one*—out of *one hundred*—evening-dresses, purchased for her by her fond husband. My dreams, after one of these visits, were an odd kaleidoscope of humming-birds, tigers, palanquins, Hindoo slaves, and rattlesnakes.

It appears strange to find, joined to the expensive muslin, a piece of coarse blue Bengalee cloth! This once belonged to poor Gulnare, the gentle ayah, who faithfully served grandma from the day that she wedded Sir Timothy. Gulnare nursed my mother during her infancy, waited on her in her childhood, and, on her young lady's marriage, was transferred entirely into her service. Her unwearied patience was afterwards called into requisition by myself and half-a-dozen brothers and sisters. A romping, wild, ungovernable set of young rebels we were! With all our faults, Gulnare doted on us. When we were grown up, and she could no longer be of service to us, she preferred returning to 'Missee,' as she still called grandma; with her she remained until my venerable relative was removed into a better world. The poor ayah did not long survive; and, in remembrance of her fond fidelity, I put the strip of coarse blue cloth next to 'Missee's' gold-wrought finery.

Léonide Thérèse d'Aunay gave me this—a bunch of beautiful violets in satin and crape, on a ground of pale pink. Look closely, and you will perceive that, by the minute interlacings of flowers, buds, and leaves, their outlines present excellent portraits of the unhappy Louis XVI. and his ill-fated queen and family. These silken mementoes of an interesting group were secretly circulated amongst the loyalists; my friend Léonide possesses one, which is elegantly framed, and occupies a conspicuous position in her drawing-room—this, as a token of her affection, she bestowed on me, and I added it to my other *souvenirs* of love and friendship. From the horrors of the French Revolution, Léonide's grandfather (one of the *haute noblesse*) fled to England, where he and his son earned, for many years, a scanty subsistence, by giving instructions in their native language. Less fortunate than most of his compeers, when quiet was restored to France, the old gentleman failed to regain his estates; in fact, he was destitute of the funds requisite to meet the incidental expenses of a lawsuit; and he who should have borne a title and left a fortune to his descendants, lived and died in an obscure garret in the metropolis. His son contrived to bestow on his little Léonide an excellent education; at sixteen years of age, she resolved, like a brave girl, to turn that education to account, and by the exercise of her talents, to assist her parents. Our acquaintance originated in a morning-call from the young lady, who came to offer her services as daily governess to my children. I accepted her offer; but on further acquaintance, finding that her qualifications entitled her to a higher post than that of instructress to two children under nine years old, I recommended her to my old friend, Sir Roderick Sharples, a rich widower, with three daughters; and there Léonide has found a home indeed.

Poor Maria Beveridge! This was *her* gift; this faded, washed-out, green and lilac calico. How miserable it looks beside the beautiful violets! The patch, once so gay, reminds me forcibly of Maria's lot. To be united at nineteen to a man whom she cared not for ('twas a sacrifice to filial duty), was bad enough, Heaven knows; but that he should prove cold-hearted, morose, a spendthrift, gambler, *drunkard*—this was terrible! Whilst Maria's parents lived, Beveridge kept his vices in the background; when they were no more, and his wife was left without any protector, save himself, then his profligacy recklessly intruded itself into notoriety. His business neglected, the inevitable result followed, and his affairs were wound up in the Court of Bankruptcy; he has *now* no employment, looks for none. Formerly, he was occasionally invited out to dinner by his old acquaintances; *now*, his disreputable, seedy wardrobe forbids even that show of kindness. Nor is there the smallest likelihood of a change for the better in his garb; friends, shocked at his out-at-elbow appearance, have repeatedly furnished him with comfortable apparel;

but no sooner does he find himself in possession of a decent garment, than he is to be seen hurrying through the back lanes and courts of the worst part of the town, in his customary threadbare suit and dilapidated boots, with a mysterious bundle under his arm, and casting furtive glances around, to ascertain whether any quondam friend may happen to be in sight. Poor Maria, her life is one perpetual scramble. Before breakfast, she makes a slop-shirt (a tolerable three pennyworth of sewing that); has a day-school, with an average of thirty very tiny scholars, at twopence a week, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., with an interval of an hour for dinner. The first time I saw a label in her window, inscribed, '*Portraits taken at a shilling*,' I was astounded. I could scarcely credit the assertion that *she* was the artist. 'Why, Maria,' said I, 'at school, you know, you never had any taste for drawing.' 'All that I know of it now, dear,' replied she, 'I have learned in the *school of adversity:* my children's necessities have converted me into a portrait-painter; and if, during the week, I can earn a stray shilling or two, I regard the money as a complete God-send.' That source of profit has ceased; photographers abound, and Maria's drawings are no longer in demand. I have heard of her remaining up all night to wash, or mend, or clean the house, and all this variety of labour she performs without so much as 'thank ye,' or a smile to cheer and encourage her. Hard work this for a girl reared in luxury, and who formerly kept her carriage; yet, withal, she is generally lively: a sense of onerous duties, well performed, supports her through trials which would break the heart, or, at least, subdue the spirits of ninety-nine women out of a hundred. Ah, on inspection you can see, too, that the scrap of washed-out calico can boast of a tiny ruby-coloured star, that will retain its brightness as long as the patch itself has being.

Now, here's the strangest piece of tapestry imaginable, the most cruel specimen of needle-work ever achieved by misdirected industry—a gem of ugliness—a rural landscape, where the trees are not as tall as the cows; the butterflies are bigger than the birds; the birds themselves larger than the red worsted lambs; the weathercock on the church-steeple blows one way, while the smoke of the cottage chimney goes in the reverse direction; while something, whether an antelope or a lion, one's zoological acumen fails to discover, is drinking from a brook in the foreground, which, contrary to the rule established by Dame Nature, runs uphill! Nobody but my whimsical friend, Medora Hinchcliffe, could have perpetrated such a *chef-d'œuvre* of incongruities. If she makes a present—and she is rather liberal that way—it is certain to be something of an absurdly *outré* description. At sundry times she has bestowed on me a little squat Hindoo idol—a bundle of obese ugliness, which I had to remove into a remote cupboard because the sight of it terrified the baby—a pair of carved Chinese nut-crackers, which stubbornly refuse to perform their legitimate functions, and prefer cracking one's fingers instead; and a crimson table-cover, bordered with—I think they are black beetles.

What next? A little innocent-looking piece of white cambric with buff sprigs; a morsel saved in the making-up of my first baby's first frock. Joined to it is a large square of rose-coloured *moire antique*, bearing a pretty wreath of oak-leaves, roses, vine and tendrils, forming altogether a tolerable picture of the character of its giver—aforesaid baby's godpapa, in which character he exhibits great liberality, as witness in their order, the coral with silver bells, and the Valenciennes christening-cap and robe; the expensive toys; and the juvenile library. Godpapa always attends her birthday parties; he joins the youngsters at hunt the slipper, blindman's buff, my lady's toilet and forfeits, generally winding up with a hearty laugh at the game of 'Fright.' If he is a loser, he produces from his capacious pockets a never-ending succession of sweetmeats, almonds and raisins, oranges and figs. But the grand affair of the evening is the birthday gift: last year, it was a handsome necklace; the year before, a work-box; this year, I really thought my girl would have gone wild with delight when he presented her with a beautiful little gold watch and chain! Kind-hearted, generous godpapa!

Sisters, old schoolmates, friends, acquaintances, some dearly loved, others almost forgotten, have given scraps of all sizes and shapes to fill up the interstices of my quilt; and lastly, my methodical housemaid, Susannah, lined and quilted (she would say *twilted*) it with due care and precision, finishing it off with a pine-apple shawl bordering, and marking my name in full with crimson silk on the inside; just as though it were possible that an article of such magnitude and so many striking peculiarities could be exchanged or lost. Heaven forbid! That patchwork quilt is as much my album as any gilt-edged, morocco-bound volume could be, and I confess, it is more to my taste; for needle-work, I love, and writing I detest. I never used a pen as much in all my life—school-days excepted—as I have done in giving this description, which nothing less valued by me than the article in question could ever have drawn forth. Thank goodness, it is finished at last; and now—— Stay, I had forgotten. As soon as it was lined, quilted, and bordered, in came my late friend, Peter Smith, with *his* offering—a neat diamond-shaped piece of white poplin, with a running pattern of evening primroses. So, here is his contribution, tacked on at the bottom of the album—a superfluous article. Just like late Peter, that was! He began life in the very same manner. The younger of twin brothers, he inherited only a hundred a year, while the elder-born (by fifteen minutes) was heir to a fine estate. Late Peter's peculiarity of being always an addition to parties which without him seemed to be perfect—for he never drops in until long after the time appointed—added to the fact of his initials being P. S., has caused his acquaintance to give him the not inapplicable nickname of the Postscript.

'D. T.'

A STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—IN HOSPITAL.

'Those horrid bells! I wish the ringers were strung up to the clappers in yon belfry. Can't they let a man die in peace!'

Mark Harrup turned on his hospital-bed, and beat the pillows with his fist. It was not the action of a dying man, nor did the voice sound much like that of a person near his last breath.

'Nay, never go to abuse the bells, man,' cried his neighbour (Number Twenty) in the next bed; 'don't be angry with a Christmas peal! It does one good to hear 'em, and they 're pleasant company to my ears.'

'Ay, and this is a precious pleasant place to listen to 'em in!' muttered Mark Harrup, with something like a curse.

'Well, I can't say that precisely. Lying in a 'orspital on Christmas-eve ain't perhaps the best sitiwation to judge o' any subject; but, anyhow, they give one something to think about to-night; and as new ideas seems to be uncommon scarce here, and lying on one's back all day staring at a wentilator ain't wery amusin', I don't see as we need quarrel wi' 'em.'

Number Twenty, a cabman and philosopher to boot, who had been brought into hospital with both his legs broken, was determined to defend the bells.

'Give one something to think about, do they?'

was his companion's rejoinder. 'A man hasn't got enough, then, to burden his brain, in this confounded den. He wants something worse to dream of than the surgeon's knife, does he? Something blacker than *the room* yonder—eh? One needs yon bells truly to awaken thought.'

The speaker clenched the brawny hand lying on the coverlet as he spoke, and shrouded his bearded face in the bed-clothes.

'Well, it's a difference of taste, I s'pose,' said Number Twenty, turning round to look at his irritable neighbour with an air of astonishment. 'I don't want to force my 'pinion down a genelman's throat; but must say I likes to 'ear 'em, and wouldn't wish to see the ringers set a-swinging. But every man has his taste; and if the Emperor o' Chiney likes birds' nests in his soup, it's no reason why Queen Wictoria shouldn't prefer turtle in hers; and so, in course, you've a right to your taste. I'd advise you to try a wink o' sleep now.'

'One might as well try to sleep under big Ben o' Westminster, as in this din,' said the other impatiently. 'I've slept beside our steam-saw at the mills many a time, but it never bothered my head like this, and never filled the air with voices neither;' and with an angry jerk, Number Nineteen, who was a sawyer by trade, and worked at some mills in Southwark, turned his face to the wall, and was still.

The philosophic cabman being thus shut up, winked his eye, knowingly, at the ventilator overhead, and betook himself to the enjoyment of the bells, merely remarking 'that they did seem going it, *rather*, up yonder.'

In truth, the ringers in the grim, smoke-stained old church that flung its shadow, day and night, over the wards of St Shambles, seemed determined not to be outdone, this Christmas-eve, by any of their brethren in the metropolis. The bells clashed and clamoured till the air vibrated again. In every chamber in the hospital could their iron tongues be heard, proclaiming to sick and dying, to hale and strong, the return of the year's great festival. Every ear in St Shambles, undulled by disease, or the approach of death, heard the bells, and every sick man's pulse quickened at the sound.

Some raised themselves on their pillows, and listened—listened with fixed faces, and dull, tearless eyes; others gave a weary sigh, and sank back again, to lie quiet and motionless as before. Some tossed and moaned, and said their brains were turning; others whispered to themselves, 'Near, very near,' and fell off into peaceful sleep, to dream of Christmas-eves long past, and the dead friends they were to rejoin ere the old year had run out.

But amongst all these listeners to the Christmas-bells—and there were men lying in St Shambles whose very hearts were thrilled at the old familiar sounds, heard so strangely in this place—no one was affected in the way Mark Harrup was. He tossed and turned, pished and pshawed, until a nurse in the ward remarked to an attendant, 'that Nineteen seemed uncommon like brain fever to-night, and she'd half a mind to clap a blister on his head;' but the threat being overheard, the symptoms subsided, and Nineteen grew calmer—outwardly, that is, for none could tell what thoughts were passing through the sick man's brain, or why the iron bed on which he lay quivered from time to time, as though its occupant were palsied. Even when the bells had ceased, Mark Harrup lay there, restless and open-eyed as before.

The streets were growing quieter now. The great tide of life that, for thirteen hours, had been flowing past the walls of St Shambles, was on the ebb. The noises of the day were at an end, and, save the stealthy footsteps of a nurse passing along the gallery outside, the striking of a clock, or closing of a distant door, not a sound could be heard. Occasionally, perhaps, a heavy wagon would rumble along over the pavement, or a brisk cab startle the street with its rattle; but these only seemed to make the silence that followed more complete. As the clock struck ten, Mark raised himself on his elbow, and looked around. What a scene! Thirty beds stretching in two long lines down the room, and thirty human beings lying there, stricken and suffering. Above their heads, the shades over the six gas-burners made six great, bird-like shadows on the ceiling, and threw a weird and gloomy aspect round the chamber; but for the breathing of the thirty sleepers, all was quiet as the tomb; the very hum of the gas sounded like the drone of some mammoth night-beetle. Mark threw himself back on his bed with a hard, dry laugh.

'This was what it had come to, then—Christmas-eve on a hospital-bed! At thirty-six, the queer devil's dance called life had brought him to the wards of St Shambles. This was the end of the fine promises and resolutions he had made to himself that summer's day at Hampton Court ten years ago, when Fanny Brown consented to become his wife. He was a thriving workman then, counted somewhat handsome, was sober and steady, and could look any man in the face; but *now*—why, his own shadow made him start, and his hand trembled with a premature palsy!' But Mark Harrup was not going to let his conscience get the mastery over him now, since he had kept it at bay so long; he refused to grapple with the dark shadows that menaced his couch, and drove them off as they swooped down like vultures to their prey.

Soon after, the lights were lowered for the night, and a dim gloom enveloped the ward. It was never anything but a dull blighted sort of place at the best of times, this hospital-chamber. Even on a bright summer's day it would strike a chill to the heart of a stranger on entering; but, seen under its night aspect, when the lowered lights cast a spectral twilight around, and strange shadows stalked from their hiding-places, the ward grew terrible and oppressive. Mark closed his eyes, and set himself to count the tickings of the clock in the gallery—his old resource for sleep.

How long he was thus engaged, he knew not. There was an interval of darkness and silence, [illegible] then he was roused from a short doze, as it seemed to him, by the opening of a door at the end of [illegible] chamber. Looking round, he saw, to his surprise, [illegible] nurse enter, followed by a stranger. They advanced together on tiptoe, the nurse leading the way, [illegible] her finger raised to counsel silence. They had reached the middle of the room, when Mark noticed that [illegible] stranger's face was hidden in her shawl, which [illegible] held so as to conceal her features.

'Which is it? Tell me, which is it?' asked [illegible] woman in a tremulous voice.

'It's Number Nineteen, my dear—the last but [illegible] in the right-hand corner,' whispered the nurse; [illegible] leaving the stranger to advance, she retired to [illegible] arm-chair at hand.

In another moment, the woman stood by Mark's bedside.

'Fanny! Good God, you here!' exclaimed [illegible] affrighted man, as the stranger bent over him.

The only answer was a sob. The woman [illegible] her knees by the bedside, and clasped her arms [illegible] his neck.

She was thinly clad for a winter's night, [illegible] looked as though the world had used her but [illegible] Fanny Harrup was sadly altered, alas! since [illegible] of Hampton Court. Care and want had [illegible] her features, and worn off the bloom from her [illegible]

Her troubles had brought not only age to her face, but rents to her dress, and acidity to her temper. Perhaps the best thing she had preserved from those days, poor soul! was the love she bore the wretched husband, whose drunken habits had at last brought him to a hospital-bed.

'Oh, Mark, Mark!' she cried, 'to think of your lying here to-night, how dreadful! Thank God, I've found you!'

For a moment the man felt moved by his wife's tenderness, but the next, he thrust her from him.

'Found me! What need had ye to seek me? Go away, go away!'

'No, no; don't say so, Mark: I'm come to bear you company awhile—to comfort you, and make you better.'

She kissed his hand again and again.

'Ay, I know what comfort you bring. You can tell me your home ain't like the same place, I s'pose,' said Mark, hardening his heart against her affection.

'Hush, Mark; don't! I ain't come for that. If you only knew the weary time I've paced the street to-night, looking up at these windows, and longing to get sight of you, you'd know I'd come to you in love and not in anger. It's through her favour I got in,' she went on, pointing to the nurse. 'It's against rules, you know, to come in after-hours; but when I heard the bells to-night, and thought of you lying here, lonely and sick, and it Christmas-eve, and everybody bright and happy, and all the windows in the streets shining with holly and firelight, I couldn't rest at home; so I put on my bonnet, and came and walked up and down outside, if only to be near you awhile, and I think I'd have been there till morning, if I couldn't ha' got in.'

'So it's them confounded bells that's sent you here, is it?' asked Mark, in a tone half fierce, half moody.

'No, not that; but they made the longing to see you keener, dear Mark. Tell me how you are to-night—stronger, I think, and better. The nurse says you'll be out now in a day or two. It's been a weary time for both on us!'

Mark Harrup made no reply; he was looking steadfastly at an ugly moving figure, seated on the iron rail at the bedfoot. It had often sat there when he was ill, and no one could drive it away. To-night, it had just alighted, and, as it caught Mark's eye, the hideous creature grinned diabolically.

'Are they kind to you, Mark?' asked the wife, striving not to appear to notice his silence.

'Try you a month in hospital yourself, and see.'

The brutal answer was whispered to him by the demon.

'I brought you these, Mark,' said the poor woman with a trembling voice. 'The children sent you them, with a kiss for father.'

She laid a couple of oranges on the bed, in the purchase of which little Jack and Fanny Harrup had that day invested three-halfpence. With a cruel laugh, Mark took them up, and, obeying the gesture of the imp, hurled them through the nearest window.

'I don't want the brats' sympathy, nor yours either, Fanny; I don't want pity nor counsel from anybody. Go home, and don't stand snivelling there: when I want you, I'll send for you.'

The crash of the broken glass, and the cry that burst from the wife's lips, startled the whole ward. In the twinkling of an eye, the nurse hurried away the unlucky visitor, and turned up the gas. As the light leaped up, the fiend at the bedfoot leaped up too, then gave a shrill laugh, turned head over heels, and sprang through the ventilator.

No sooner had Mark witnessed this surprising gymnastic feat, than he closed his eyes, turned over unconcernedly on his bed, and fell fast asleep again.

He was awakened some time after, by a sudden jerk that almost threw him out of bed. He opened his eyes; it was still night.

Mark Harrup could have sworn that the foot of the bed had been suddenly lifted up from the floor and dropped again. He looked round; there was no one there. All was quiet and still—all just the same as when he went to sleep, save the ray of moonshine stealing down the opposite wall.

'Pshaw! a dream,' muttered Mark, angry at the tremor of fear that had run through all his limbs, and he closed his eyes again, tightly and resolutely.

He had not lain more than half a minute, ere he felt a sensation as though there was some one underneath the bed, engaged in poking at the mattress, and giving double knocks like postman's raps on the iron framework. Mark grew rather hot, but disdained to make any reply to these intrusive appeals. 'He wasn't going to be humbugged by that sort o' thing; let 'em rap all night.'

He was very nearly calling out, however, and abandoning his stoicism, when he felt something plucking at the bed-clothes, and, opening his eyes, saw the counterpane drawn slowly from the bed by some invisible means. Just as it disappeared at the foot of the bed, he heard a well-known laugh, and the next moment, without so much as 'by your leave,' his old visitor, the mocking fiend, sprang out of cover, and turning a double somersault, alighted nonchalantly within a foot of Mark's nose.

'Cold night, Mark! Take a drop?' asked Diabolus familiarly, holding up a black phial as he spoke.

Mark made no reply.

'Don't be shy, old fellow! it's the right tap, and will warm your blood. Here, sit up; you can't drink lying on your back.'

Thus invited, Mark sat up, and took a pull at the flask. Though no baby at strong drinks, it brought the tears into his eyes.

'There, now, you feel more comfortable, I daresay. Well, did you think I'd forgotten you, eh? Not been your way, lately; busy time; lots of patients on hand just now. It's surprising how our business increases at this season of the year. Ah! we are a race o' benefactors,' continued the imp, with a philanthropic shake of the head. 'I don't know what you men and women would do without us.'

Mark gave a sort of laugh. The cordial had warmed his heart.

'Your doctor's physic is all very well for rich folks in their warm rooms,' continued the imp; 'but this is the poor man's medicine; this is the stuff to keep up the heart and keep out the cold. Now, I'd undertake to cure you, Mark, in five-and-twenty minutes. *I* see what's the matter with you.'

Affecting a professional air, the goblin eyed Mark with its head on one side, and, lifting up his hand in its clawy fingers, gravely proceeded to feel his pulse.

'Weak, flabby, I see. Hospital diet, gloomy thoughts, low spirits—won't do! Brisk treatment and generous liquids required. Now, be advised by me, and take a sip from this bottle every five minutes, and if you ain't cured in half an hour, my name isn't—hem—*your* name, I mean, isn't Harrup.'

Mark took the proffered bottle, and looking at it, said: 'I'd like to know what you call it; p'raps it mayn't suit my constitution. What's that?' He pointed to a label, bearing an inscription that looked vastly like 'Aqua Infernorum.'

'Oh, that's merely the Latin name employed in our pharmacopœia; purely technical. Smell it; it ain't very bad.'

Mark took a sniff, and no longer hesitated.

'Well, I'm no scholar; I suppose it's all right.' And, so saying, he swallowed off draught number one.

'I told you it was the right stuff,' chuckled the imp, as the patient felt a warm glow run through his veins. 'Take the rest, and you'll be another man.'

True enough, with each fresh draught, Mark Harrup felt a wondrous change stealing over him: his pulse quickened steadily; his limbs lost their weakness, and his spirits rose. From the languor of convalescence, he had emerged into a state of comfortable health.

'One more. Drink it off; it's the last.' The demon raised the bottle to Mark's mouth, and poured the remainder of its contents down his throat, to the last drop.

That done, Diabolus, who seemed an active sort of person, and acquainted with all the arrangements of the hospital, leaped away to a closet near, and, after foraging therein, appeared laden with a bundle of clothes, neatly folded, and ticketed 'Number Nineteen.'

Whilst the goblin's back was turned to him, Mark noticed a peculiar appearance between the creature's shoulders—a sort of hieroglyph in yellow Roman capitals. He had seen many a queer sight, but this beat all the moles, humps, and other deformities he had ever beheld.

'If you wouldn't mind, sir, p'raps you'd tell me what's amiss with your spine?' said Mark, putting the question as delicately as possible.

'What! "D. T.?" Oh, that's nothing: merely an abbreviation of my name. It's a sort of family crest, you know, that we wear on our backs, instead of on our spoons. Saves tax, you see, for armorial bearings, and gives one a short name, easy to remember —two decided advantages in a large family.'

'You ain't got a large family?' asked Mark with open eyes.

'Pretty fair. I've connections in every city on the map. I'll introduce you to my elder brothers one day: three pleasant fellows they are too. But come, here's your kit; jump up, slip into your things, and we're off.'

'Off?' repeated Mark, staring in amazement.

'Yes, off! I suppose you won't fret much to leave this place, eh?'

'No, not exactly. But I don't see how.'

'Leave that to me. Only make haste; my time's short.'

There was such an air of decision about the queer creature, and, in spite of his pigmy stature, 'D. T.' was so evidently a person not to be trifled with, that Mark Harrup obeyed without further hesitation.

He had just finished his hasty toilet—watched all the time by the goblin seated on the bed-rail—when the clock in the gallery struck five.

'Make haste; we shall have the whole house up before we're off. Come along;' and curling his tail round his neck, boa-wise, as though afraid of catching a sore throat in the night-air, the imp sprang from his perch, and bidding Mark carry his shoes in his hand, made his way softly to the door.

It opened noiselessly under the demoniacal touch, and the next minute, they stood in the dimly lighted gallery.

'How about passing the night-watch?' whispered Mark, as they descended the great stone staircase.

'Never you mind,' replied his guide curtly; 'stand there,' and leaving Mark in a shadowy angle, the fiend precipitated himself over the banisters, and dropped down stealthily into the hall.

'That's a good un,' muttered Mark. 'What's he up to now? An old villain!'

The old villain had stolen up to the porter's chair, and was peering into a glass and jug on the bench at his side. Looking carefully around him, he proceeded to pour a few drops from the black bottle—no more empty than a conjuror's—into the aforesaid jug, which straightway sent forth such a goodly aroma, that the drowsy porter was seized with sudden thirst, and pouring out its contents, drank off a bumper.

'Now then,' whispered the imp from below. 'Come down; he's all right;' and indeed the watcher of the night was already snoring like the Seven Sleepers in one.

Frank descended the stairs, in obedience to the summons.

'This way,' said his diabolical conductor; and they crossed the hall, opened the double doors, and passed out into the wintry darkness of an early December morning.

'Now, you're free,' said the fiend as they stood under the gas-lighted porch—'free to go where you will. I must be off; I've lots of work on hand. Stay; which way are you going? Across the water, eh?'

Mark nodded affirmatively: his home was on the Surrey side.

'Come along then; we needn't part company yet: that's my road,' grinned the goblin.

Mark did not feel flattered by this proof of friendship. 'D. T.' was not quite the sort of person one would wish to be seen with in a public street. His personal appearance was decidedly against him, and Mark didn't know how it might be taken by the authorities. When he observed a policeman in sight, Mark, in his embarrassment, suggested a retreat.

'Nonsense!—I'm invisible,' was the cool reply. X 30 certainly took no more notice of Mark's friend than if he were in the habit of meeting sable goblins, with their tails round their necks, taking the air on his beat any morning in the year. And yet D. T.'s extraordinary behaviour would have justified the law's interference. If ever a denizen of the other world shewed itself of an ill-conditioned turn of mind, it was the bearer of that black bottle. Wherever he appeared, brawls arose, and the streets rang with noise and strife. There were few persons about yet, but nearly all who were, felt the evil influence in the air. A few drops from that magic phial sprinkled into the cups on the coffee-stall caused the Irish labourers breakfasting there to become so quarrelsome, that the coffee-vender threatened to summon the police. A sweep, starting out on his morning rounds, grew so vindictive after a pint of beer adulterated by the aforesaid process, that he turned round and kicked his shivering apprentice without the smallest provocation; while two cabmen, amicably disputing at the public-house door as to which should pay for the fourpenny-worth of gin they had just consumed, suddenly both repudiated the debt, and fell to blows before they could be separated. The glee with which the imp would go on again after these achievements, gave Mark an uneasy sort of qualm. Added to that, he did not much like the invisibility his companion wore to all other eyes. 'It was an awful thing,' Mark often said afterwards, 'to see the queer creature leaping about the street, while nobody appeared to notice it but himself; or to hear it come yelling after him, when no one turned round to look at it.'

How they ever reached Blackfriar's Bridge without being taken into custody, astonished Mark not a little. There they were, however, just as a gray light was breaking in the east, and the dome of St Paul's rising shadowily through mist and smoke. The gas-lights still glimmered on the bridge, but they were growing pale before the dawn. They were midway across the bridge, when the imp, who had taken to the stone balustrade in preference to the pavement, stopped short.

'Now we part; my time's up, old fellow! Here's your very good health, Mark, and a merry Christmas and a happy new-year to you!'

D. T. poised on one leg like an obscene Mercury, put the black bottle to his lips, flourished it over and, with a loud laugh, sprang from the parapet, and dropped below. Whether he alighted in the barge just passing underneath, and paid a visit to the three coal-heavers there, or whether he sank down into the foul waters of the Thames, Mark never knew.

'Merry Christmas!' he muttered, repeating to himself the fiend's mocking words, as he pursued his way across the bridge: 'it's precious little merriment I'll have, I s'pose. I'd forgot it's Christmas-day.'

THE ELAND.

Let all poor troubled eight hundred and thousand-a-year men, and those who are familiar with their mahogany, rejoice! a formidable rival threatens to displace that autocrat of our stereotyped English dinner, 'the inevitable haunch of mutton.' A new candidate has appeared for the suffrages of dinner-givers and dinner-eaters, and science has been called in to decide upon the claims of the aspirant to the honours of the cloth. A quartett of naturalists have lately sat as a committee of taste to test the merits of the flesh of the eland, and their verdict only confirms the good report of every traveller in Southern Africa, whether missionary or soldier, savant or sportsman. Barrow, Lichtenstein, Alexander, Harris, Richardson, Napier, Gordon Cumming, and Livingstone, all join with the Bechuanas and Matabilis in eulogising the juiciness, tenderness, and delicious flavour of eland steaks, agreeing

Nor finer nor fatter
E'er roamed in a forest or smoked on a platter.

The eland (*Oreas Canna*), or Cape elk, is the most magnificent of antelopes, not at all resembling the perverse animal the unfortunate poet could not love but it was sure to pine and die, but a deep-chested, obese ranger of the karoos of South Africa, weighing in his own proper person some eighteen hundred pounds. The male eland, 'lord of a hundred does,' stands from five to six and a half feet high at the shoulders—the great elevation of which suggests the presence of a hump, although none exists—and measures in extreme length twelve feet. The body is covered with short hair, varying in colour according to the age of the animal, being reddish fawn, ashy blue, or sandy gray. A short, erect, dark-brown mane runs from the centre of the forehead to the root of the tail, which is rather more than two feet long, and terminates in a tuft of black hair. Its legs are short, which, combined with great bulk, renders the eland the least speedy of its species. Possessing some of the features of the bovine race, its head and horns prove its affinity with the deer family. The former is long, pointed, light and graceful, with large ears, set on a thick neck, furnished with a dewlap fringed with long hair; there is also a large protuberance on the larynx, resembling that of the elk, from which some suppose it derives its name. The thick and heavy horns are particularly handsome; about a foot and half long, and tapering towards the ends; they are almost straight till within three inches of the tips, when they curve outwards, a thick spiral wreath passing twice round them. In the shorter, thinner horns of the female, this spiral wreath is very indistinctly marked, while she is altogether smaller than her lord, and looks very like a red Guernsey cow.

The elands are independent of water, and wander over the plains in herds of from ten to a hundred, the bulls gallantly leading the herd in advancing, and bringing up the rear when retreating from a foe. As is the case with other tribes of deer and antelopes, the old males often retire altogether from feminine society, and establish a species of bachelors' club. A herd of these misanthropical old gentlemen, when in good condition, looks very much like a drove of stall-fed oxen. Like our domestic cattle, they are troubled with ticks and parasitic flies, and are likewise subject at the end of the rainy season to a disease called the 'brande-sichte' or burning sickness, when the hair falls off, the skin becomes covered with scurf, and the joints stiffen till the animal languishes and dies.

Forty or fifty years is supposed to be the average length of an eland's life—accidents excepted; and at sixteen they may be considered full grown, when the flesh—which is fit for eating immediately after killing—is said to resemble beef in grain and colour, but with a better and more delicate taste, possessing a pure game flavour. It is a delicacy in high favour with the Caffres and colonists, either fresh or salted; and thigh-tongues—the large muscles of the thighs dried and cured—are especial favourites at colonial tables. The fat serves for candles, cart-grease, and culinary purposes; the hide ranks next to that of the buffalo for harness and forest-shoes; and the natives use the horns as tobacco-pipes. Possessing such valuable qualities, the eland is, of course, the chief object of the South African hunter, nor is he much trouble to him. Unlike the gemsbok, which will turn on its pursuer, and dies hard, the eland is devoid of courage; mild and patient to such a degree, that the sportsman can ride into the very middle of the herd and choose his especial victim, which he drives, if possible, in the direction of his home, and as near to it as he can, before killing it. The animal runs against the wind, and soon tires; when hard pressed, exudes a red oily perspiration, and often terminates a long chase by falling down dead from plethora. Major Harris gives the following spirited account of his first eland hunt: 'The feelings of exultation which attended my first introduction to this noble quadruped on the wooded banks of the Meritsam, will not readily pass from my recollection. My companion and myself had been for some time engaged in the hot pursuit of a motley group of brindled gnoos, quaggas, ostriches, sassaybes, and hartebeests, the thunder of whose hoofs, like the distant din of war, sounded in our ears

As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air.

A band of hungry harpies following in our track tripped nimbly up each victim as it fell—completing, by the scientific insertion of the point of an assegai between the vertebræ of the back, the work which our rifle-bullets had commenced, and instantly covering the carcass with branches, to secure it from the voracity of a host of attendant vultures—when two strange figures were suddenly perceived in the distance, monsters of obesity, which we instantly recognised to be elands. Swinging their pendulum-like tails from side to side, and sometimes brushing away the troublesome flies with their moist noses, these mountains of flesh and lard were lazily standing under the shade of one of those thatched cities constructed by the Lexia in a wide-spreading mohaala, of which the numbers were distributed with park-like regularity over the level face of the landscape. At the first glimpse of the sleek forms of these animals, the savages became strangely excited; water trickled from their capacious mouths, and they impatiently urged us to the pursuit, by running in advance of our horses, pointing energetically with their fingers, and exclaiming with eager delight, "Pooffo, Pooffo!" Nor had many seconds elapsed ere we found ourselves pressing our panting steeds to the utmost at their retiring heels. Trusting to escape by mixing with the flying troops of gnoos and quaggas which continually dashed across our path, or divided on either side to admit the passage of the chase; their hairy dewlaps vibrated from side to side, and their pursy ribs quivered again with the unusual exertion. Notwithstanding their unwieldy shape, that had at first greatly the speed of our jaded and toilworn horses, covering the ground with a celerity truly surprising, and making the firm earth ring with their efforts to escape. But on being pushed, they presently exhibited signs of distress, and turning their beautiful heads, looked over their plump shoulders to learn if they had not shaken off their persecutors. Finding us still at their heels, they shortly separated; their sleek coats turned first blue, and then white with froth; the foam fell in bell-ropes from their open mouths, grease trickled from their nostrils, and the perspiration streamed from their lusty sides. The steeds came up hand over hand, and in another moment were abreast of the fugitives, whose pace gradually slackened till it dwindled into a clumsy trot; when with their full brilliant eyes turned imploringly towards us, saying, almost plainer than words could speak, "Do, pray, sir, leave me alone." At the end of a mile, unresistingly, each was laid low with a single ball.'

When Barrow visited the Cape in 1798, elands were abundant near Cape Town; but he warned the colonists of the inevitable result of the extravagant and wasteful manner in which they thinned the herds of the male beasts. Persecuted by boors, Griquas, and even unmounted savages, who run them down on foot, they have been driven to seek fresh fields and pastures new northward of the St John's River, where, and in the Natal country, large herds of elands still are found; in summer, occupying the range of the Drakenberg mountains; in winter, ranging the open prairies, or browsing in the belts of shaded hillocks of the low country.

The late Earl of Derby imported a pair of elands into England, adding them to his choice collection of live-stock at Knowsley, where they throve, increased, and multiplied. At his decease, the small herd, according to his bequest, passed into the hands of the Zoological Society; since which, they have increased beyond the accommodating power at Regent's Park. Viscount Hill introduced a couple into his park at Hawkstone, near Shrewsbury, with such complete success, that he resolved to fatten a young male eland for the table. This was done, a portion finding its way to the royal larder, and the part answering to the 'short ribs' of beef being kindly sent to the great naturalist, Mr Richard Owen, who, after hanging it for ten days, invited a trio of fellow-savans to test the quality. The joint was simply roasted, and when served, was of the colour of pork, without any fat being mixed with the lean; but there was plenty upon the inside of the ribs and round the kidney, which proved the perfection of fat. The judges unanimously declared it to be 'the finest, closest, most tender, and masticable of any meat,' the taste sweet and good, like veal, with a delicate pheasant flavour added. Had the animal killed been older, the result would probably have been still more satisfactory; but it was quite enough so to make us hope other gentlemen may follow Lord Hill's example, and naturalise the eland among us, and thereby 'add a new and superior kind of food to a rather restricted choice.'

THE ANNALS OF OUR NEIGHBOURS.

The quarrels between man and man which at all events end with life, and are not of necessity hurtful to any individuals but themselves, are rightly termed 'misunderstandings;' while the quarrels of nations, which have no natural end, and are ruinous to the world at large, are supposed to arise from subtler causes, to which some high-sounding but unsatisfactory name is given, such as 'antipathy of races.' But is not this very antipathy begotten, or, at all events, greatly nurtured, by misunderstanding? There can scarcely be kindly alliance between two neighbouring families of men whose intercourse for a thousand years has been a perpetual duel, from the epoch of stone-headed javelins down to almost that of Minié rifles, if, in addition to learning all the harm of one another, they are resolute to hear none of the good. And that is the position which we English held until quite lately with regard to the French. We had got, reluctantly and by very slow degrees, to believe 'that a Dutchman did not wear seven pair of trousers, that an Italian sometimes succeeded in *not* murdering his mother;' but any charitable understanding of our nearer neighbours over the water, we had none. When moderate people talked of an alliance between us, we agreed with the keen Wit's remark, that 'the best thing between the English and the French was the British Channel.' We knew nothing about them, and we did not want to know. Even now, with the exception of the volume before us,* we do not know where to look for a complete History of France that will instruct as well as delight an Englishman.

Our popular notions of French history are confined to those portions of it in which we ourselves have been most heroically concerned—the battles of Crecy, Poitiers, Agincourt, and Waterloo; and even in such incidents we have preferred, where we could, to take Shakspeare for our guide rather than a historian. The great French Revolution, in spite of Mr Carlyle, we have always cited as a conclusive proof of our allegation that the French are at once the cruelest and most cowardly people under the sun; and when we have been truly told how that dreadful thing came about; how

> A terrific reservoir of guilt
> And ignorance filled up from age to age,
> That could no longer hold its loathsome charge,
> Had burst and spread in deluge through the land;

how the court, aristocracy, and priesthood were only reaping the harvest, centuries old, of their own unmentionable tyrannies and foul injustice, we only took out our pocket handkerchiefs to weep for—Marie Antoinette. *We* happily are not in the position to understand what the starvation—literal starvation—of millions of abject poor will produce when contrasted with the measureless luxury and incredible vice and heartlessness of one hundred and fifty thousand rich. If, at the furious outburst of the pent-up force, the latter were annihilated, and the former endowed with too great a power, 'it is not for us to find fault, whom it took hundreds of years to consolidate our freedom, and who have had the good-fortune to distribute the harshnesses and wrong-doings of the struggle over so long a period. The aggregate of our sufferings and crimes escapes our observation. If all the woes, violences, and iniquities of every kind, from the wars of the barons to the expulsion of the Stuarts, which it has cost our country to assemble six hundred and fifty-eight gentlemen in council at Westminster, were compressed into four or five years, we should have little cause to look down scornfully or shudderingly on the atrocities of the French Revolution.'

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* *History of France, from the Earliest Times to 1848.* By the Rev. James White. Blackwood and Sons.

It is, however, with respect to the earlier annals of our neighbours that this nation is most lamentably in the dark, whose youth are far more intimately acquainted with the life of Cæsar than that of Condé, and whose ideas of the character of Henry of Navarre are mainly derived from Lord Macaulay's *Battle of Ivry*. The Roman Catholic priesthood, which has worked in France as much wickedness as in any other country in the world, had at one time, even there, a bright side to it, of which Mr White has given us a reflection not unworthy of the historian we have just named. He is speaking of the religious movement in the reign of Henry I., after the civil dissensions had ceased through exhaustion of the combatants, and before the rules of feudalism were established:

'Every village was enriched with a house of worship, every warrior's hall became a centre of intelligence and life. The mason who worked the tracery of the abbey-walls could not be destitute of other kinds of skill; the colourist who stained the windows, the carver who fretted the screen, brought their local information to the general stock. The man who had traversed the Alps and rested in the streets of Rome, or, grander still, the man who had taken ship at Venice and passed the Grecian Isles, and sprung ashore at the harbour of Aleppo, and climbed the Mount of Olives, could not fail, however deficient in art or education, to bring back with him vast stores of new and elevating thoughts. Nor were their pilgrimages altogether without reward, even in a pecuniary sense. From the early seats of the Faith they brought back relics and memorials which were worth their weight in gold. Already the new-built churches were glorified with the possession of cart-loads of real bones and chips of holy wood. Even a fragment of stone from the floor of Pilate's judgment-hall, or a pebble from the garden of Gethsemane, was set in costly frame, and placed with prayers and processions on the altar. Elevated, ennobled, almost sanctified by the mysteries of art and the treasures of superstition, the priest exercised a sway over the simple crowd which it is impossible to understand, and which it would be wrong to undervalue; for the priest was the patron, friend, and protector to whom, in all their woes, they were certain to have recourse. Though in later times ambition and the natural corruption of prosperity combined to raise the priestly office above the other orders in the state, in the early days of priestcraft its influence was beneficial. It established a barrier between brute strength and individual weakness. It was an idea; and great progress is always made when the mind is able to realise something which is not tangible by the hand or visible to the eye. It is, in fact, the first triumph of mind over matter. Sword and spear were blunted against the great thought represented by the church, for it embodied all we have ever fought for since—the equality of man in the sight of God, and the necessity of justice, mercy, and peace.'

A scholar and dramatic poet, such as our author, may be supposed to have a leaning towards these picturesque 'good old times,' with which worthy common-sense persons, who love to sleep secure in their beds with the knowledge that the new police is established, have little sympathy; but this is not the case. The so-called chivalry of the middle ages is thus scattered at the steel point of our author's pen:

'If Henry V. [of England] in his selfish ambition did nothing for the permanent benefit of his conquest [of France] by kindness or legislation, he was still the greatest benefactor the French people ever saw, by scattering for ever the horde of high-born robbers and oppressors who could neither defend the honour of their country, nor obey its laws. When great political changes are about to take place, it has been remarked that they are heralded by the perpetration of enormous crimes. These are the ground-swell, as it were, which shew the approach of the great tempest before the wind is heard. Princes had put princes to death by cowardly surprise or open violence. The two eldest sons of the king had been poisoned, within a year of each other, by contending factions. Great officers had been seized and imprisoned till ransom was paid. Estates were forcibly taken possession of, and held at the point of the sword, without even a pretence of law or right. In every county there were barons who kept their retainers by the plunder of the surrounding country; and prisoners—peaceful pilgrims or enterprising merchants, who risked the danger of passing from place to place—were inhumanly tortured till they yielded their stores, or put to death with every circumstance of mutilation and dishonour. Any observant spectator must have seen that these things portended a change—that the forms of society itself required a complete alteration, and that the time for insolent bullies in steel helmets and emblazoned shields was fairly past. Romance and sentiment have unfortunately obliterated the real features of that condition, so that we look back through the magical glass of *Ivanhoe* and the other records of a fanciful state of manners, and see nothing of the actual scene. Sir Walter and his followers perform feats like those of the mesmerists, who tell their adepts to see flowery meadows or waving woods on the blank wall of a dungeon; or to hear enchanted flutes and delicious harmonies in the sharpening of a saw. But let us go to the fountain-head of all these imaginings, to the contemporary chroniclers of knightly deeds; or, better still, to the authenticated statements of the sufferings of the weak and unprotected. You find no instance of generosity or justice. Moral feeling and Christian charities are choked up by the coat of mail. Of all the gallant array who fought and fell at Agincourt, not one in twenty could write his own name.'

Where real romance did not exist, however, the French have been always ready to supply the article by artificial means. During the terrible wars of the League, when the king, and Henry of Guise, and Henry of Navarre, were all very literally 'at daggers drawn,' the queen-mother instituted a sort of chivalry of vice. 'She invited the young prince of Navarre—for he did not take the name of king while his mother, Jane d'Albret, lived—to come to her court with all the cavaliers he chose. There were balls and dances every night, and the appearance of the greatest cordiality; for a radius of a mile and a half was established round the house, within which quarrels and fighting were unknown. It was an oasis consecrated to the coarser Venus. But outside those narrow limits the war raged with undiminished ardour. A Huguenot lord, after joining in the same dance with a Catholic, would ask him to accompany him for a ride across the line, and the survivor came in with bloody sword to boast of the result. One night, Henry gave a return-entertainment to the queen and all the court. When the supper was over, and the dances were resumed, Henry slipped out of the garden, joined Sully and some other young nobles who were waiting his arrival, and rode all night. On the following day, the queen-mother heard that one of her towns, about thirty miles off, had been surprised and pillaged; and when Henry rode back within the peaceful circle, complimented him on the success of his stratagem.'

In addition to our author's great power of description, he has a still rarer faculty, and one almost peculiar to the nation of whom he is writing—namely, that of epigrammatic conciseness. The death of the Chevalier Bayard, the last of all the goodly fellowship of famous knights, who had lived beyond his time and into evil days, is thus described. His side is crushed by an arquebuse-ball, and he is carried from the battle-field.

'Bayard confessed himself to one of his attendants, as there was no priest to be found, and said his last prayer with his eye fixed on the cross formed by the hilt of his sword. The descendant of Amadis de Gaul died of a musket-bullet, to shew that chivalry was out of date.' And again, 'the Count of Artois was a libertine in his private life, and a devotee in religious faith; and if he had any share in the blood of Henry IV., carried the white plume of Navarre, not in his helmet, but in his heart.'

As a matter of present interest, it is striking to observe how, in all ages, Italy has risen before the eyes of France as the promised land—how the remembrance of the old connection between the countries, between the House of Anjou and the kingdom of Naples, between the House of Orleans and the Duchy of Milan, has never died away, although 'one campaign in Italy has been so like another, that it would serve to describe them all if we said the French burst triumphantly on the land, and after a short time, were expelled with half their number.'

Long, long ago, also, before the age Napoleonic, either of uncle or nephew, was dreamt of, we are forced to agree with our author that 'the French, more than any other nation, seem worshippers of power, without inquiring how it was attained, or on what foundation it rests. Provided a sceptre be firmly held, and is feared and respected enough by others, they do not seem to care how blood-stained its handle may be, or how terribly it oppresses themselves.'

Nevertheless, we do not doubt that the effect of this eloquent and interesting volume upon its readers will be, upon the whole, of exceeding benefit: they will learn from it that France has produced great and wise, and good and brave men, as our own country has; that her people are generous-hearted, and true lovers of liberty, albeit they have often loved her not wisely, but too well; that we English have many points in common with our neighbours after all, and that our points of difference are not, at all events, likely to be ever satisfactorily adjusted by the point of the bayonet.

WHAT I WENT THROUGH TO GET HER.

She is mine at last. No more doubts, no more fears, no more truckling to eccentric relations! She is mine, body, mind, and three per cents. (all but ten thousand settled upon her) mine! It is *my* bonnet that she is now taking such a time about tying on her head. Well may I triumph: neither Jason in pursuit of the Golden Fleece—myth typifying a rich heiress, in whose presence the adventurer felt remarkably sheepish—nor Aladdin, nor the hero of any one of Mr G. P. R. James's novels, ever went through a more trying ordeal than I. But let me calm these transports, that I may relate, in a simple, unimpassioned manner, what difficulties I had to surmount antecedent to the conversion of Miss Potts into Mrs Pans.

Mr Sidney Herbert wishes to make all writers subscribe their names to their articles. Short-sighted individual! were it not for the anonymous nature of this communication—for, of course, Pans is a *nom de plume*—modesty would prevent my informing him and the public generally of the fact that I have always been esteemed good-looking; so much so, indeed, that I have habitually noticed that my entrance into a drawing-room where ladies were assembled has caused a decided sensation. While my features are thus prepossessing, and my figure, though somewhat short, of exquisite symmetry, my manners are so elegant, my address so pleasing, that I am almost as great a favourite with my own sex as with the other.

'Pans, old fellow,' said Lord D——y to me only yesterday at the Conservative, 'what charm have you got to make every one so fond of you? When you die or marry, the committee intend to put the porter in mourning, and have nothing but black-edged paper in the writing-room for a month!'

It is gratifying to find one's self appreciated, and a bachelor London life had considerable charms for me, so that for some years I felt no inclination to follow the example of Hercules, and exchange my club for a distaff.

But the year before last was an eventful one for me: I had a touch of the gout, the wrong horse won the Derby, my principal tenant insisted on my helping him to drain, and I lost a lawsuit. So that when I heard that Miss Sarah Potts was likely to inherit the property of her paternal uncle, Colonel Sir George Potts, late governor of Semetary Island, it occurred to me that I had danced much and carried flirtation to the very verge of proposal with that young lady, whose beauty had always fascinated, while her good temper had charmed me. Indeed, she had only needed this touch from the philosopher's-stone to render her irresistible; so I packed up my portmanteau, and started for Scarborough, where the Potts family were then residing.

Veni, vidi, vici!

'But,' whispered the dearest and most sensible of girls, as I wrapped her opera-cloak round her pearly shoulders, on the most eventful of nights, 'oh, Charles, beware how you offend my uncle, and, above all things, *humour my aunt!*'

If I pride myself upon anything, it is my power of making myself agreeable to everybody, of whatever age, sex, or condition—indeed, I have reason to suppose that some of my friends consider me actually stupid, so nicely can I adapt my conversation to my company—and it was with a confident heart and firm hand that I rang the bell of Colonel Potts's lodgings on the following morning.

The door opened with a suddenness which startled me, and I found myself opposite a six-foot footman, tall, stiff, and erect as a Potsdam grenadier, who went, at my desire, to see if his master was at home, and then returned with an affirmative answer, and heralded me up-stairs.

As I entered the apartment, I heard a rustle, and saw the door of an inner room close, which distracted my thoughts for a moment, so that it required a violent effort of will to concentrate my attention on the object before me. The object before me was a stout, short gentleman of about fifty, with white hair, white whiskers, and very shaggy white eyebrows—a chilling uniformity of colour, somewhat relieved by his having yellows instead of whites to his eyes, while the same delicate primrose tinge spread over the surface of his cheeks and forehead, the whole countenance being warmed by the rich rosy tint of his nose. He wore gray trousers, and a frock-coat not buttoned so closely as altogether to hide his fine linen shirt-frill and buff waistcoat. He carried his watch in his trouser-fob, had a great bunch of seals jingling and swaying about his epigastric regions, wore a heavy gold double eye-glass round his neck, choked himself up in a satin stock with a buckle behind it, and was altogether of the 'old school.'

'I knew Miss Potts formerly, sir,' said I, plunging in at once; 'indeed, I may say, I was intimate with her family; so, seeing her here, and learning that she was at present residing with you, I have taken the liberty of calling'——

'No liberty at all, sir; as a friend of my late brother, I am delighted to make your acquaintance. Pray, be seated; Lady Potts will be down directly.'

And we began to converse about a variety of topics, on some of which I found myself expressing very singular opinions, for, in my anxiety to bring the conversation round to Sarah, I said I hardly knew what, till at last, fearing he would form a bad opinion of me, I apologised for my inattention, and told him right out that I came as a suitor for his niece's hand.

He was rather taken aback, I think, for he hemmed and hawed and took snuff, and spent a considerable time in brushing off certain imaginary particles of the pungent dust from his shirt-frill before he answered.

'Quite right, Mr Pans; you have acted in a very honourable and straightforward manner. Yes, you have done well to apply first to the commanding-officer for leave to'——

'A-ahem!' coughed some one in the next room; for a folding-door which spread across from wall to wall, but which did not fit very closely to the floor or ceiling, was the only partition separating the apartments, through which sound circulated with such ease that a poor lady could not even clear her throat without being overheard.

'By the by,' continued the colonel, 'as our conference will probably be a longer one than I at first supposed, I will just finish a little pressing matter I was engaged upon when you came in, and return. I shall not be long.' He left the room by the outer door, and presently after I heard that of the next room open and shut, and then voices.

'Whish—whish—shish—wish—shish.'

'Well, my dear, what the dickens am I to say?'

'Hush—sh—sh—sh—sh. Whish—shish—whish.'

'Wurwurwurrerwur,' &c., &c.

The colonel had gone to *his* commanding-officer for orders. In about ten minutes he came back.

'Pardon me,' he said, 'for keeping you waiting so long. Now for this matter we were speaking of. First, let me explain to you how far my authority extends over my niece. She can, of course, marry whom she pleases; but if I did not approve of the match, I should not consider myself bound to do anything for her: if, on the other hand, I and—and Mrs Potts—were pleased with her choice, she would continue to hold the place she at present occupies in my will, and I should pay down as her marriage-portion L.*x*.'

The voice went on, but what it uttered was inaudible to my mind for the next five minutes. The sum represented by *x* so far exceeded my expectations, that I was lost, bewildered, breathless with anxiety at the bare idea of losing my dearest Sarah: never had my imagination painted her charms in such glowing colours.

'And now,' the colonel was saying when I had somewhat recovered, 'I should like to ask you a few questions. It is the fashion now-a-days to depreciate the advantages of birth and blood; to me they are of vital importance: I consider that there is as much difference between a gentleman and a plebeian, as between a race-horse and a donkey. I should like to hear a few details about your family.'

While I was yet descanting on the merits of my forefathers, a dark object, observable through the slit of the door, was suddenly removed, the sunbeams gleamed in through one unbroken line, and, by a singular coincidence, Lady Potts immediately afterwards entered the room. She was a tall, bony woman, with a Roman nose, large under-jaw, muddy green eyes, sallow complexion, and low forehead. She was dressed in a magnificent velvet gown, wonderful black hair, a small lace-cap, and chains, rings, and bracelets costly enough to make a garrotter howl at the thought that she never ventured out on foot after dusk. Her age was about—— Whither are you hurrying me, pen indiscreet! respect the weakness of a weaker sex, and state ambiguously that her age was forty, as her hair was rooted—*more or less*. The lady was stately, and alluded much to her late elevated position—in the colonies, I mean, not behind the door.

'The weather is very warm,' said I.

'Well, I suppose it is,' she replied; 'but after so many years' residence in a tropical climate, I do not feel the heat so much as others.'

'Ah! no, you would not. The scenery about here is very pretty.'

'Is it? I dare say. Everything was so bright and on so gigantic a scale in Semetary Island, that these muddy waves, stunted trees, and little hillocks seem hardly worth looking at.'

'Oh, no doubt. Ah! I think I saw you at the Assembly Rooms last night; very fine, are they not?'

She smiled loftily, and gently shook her head.

'I am no judge. My ball-room at the palace, &c., &c.'

It was very hard work, but I at length succeeded in making a favourable impression, for Lady Potts made a sign to her Sir, who, being well trained, immediately took up his cue.

'Well,' said he, 'to return to the matter you have called here to speak about: we must know a little more of you before we can make any promise. We leave this the day after to-morrow, and return to Norfolk, to be in time for the first of September. Come down and help me to murder the partridges. Are you a good shot?'

I left the house triumphant, but trembling. I had secured a footing, and a good one, but what a trial was before me! An examination is always a nervous thing, but fancy going in for an indefinite *vivâ voce.* That was the prospect before me. I returned at once to London, had my gun and shooting-gear put in order, selected an extensive assortment of clothes, and started for Montgomery Park, Norfolk, on Bartholomew's Eve (partridge reckoning).

The coach put me down at a small inn called the 'Montgomery Arms,' where I found a dog-cart waiting for me, and then I had a three-mile drive through the Potts estates. The land was rich, the turnips fine, the grass good, the timber magnificent; and when I thought that all this might perhaps be one day mine, my brain grew dizzy, and my heart bounded in my bosom.

The Hall was a handsome building of white stone, the centre, with its portico and pillars, standing out in advance of the two wings, and was situated on a rising-ground, with a neat flower-garden in front, separated by an invisible haha from the park, which sloped gradually down to the shores of a small lake. The moment the dog-cart stopped, two grooms seized upon my luggage, and carried it round to the back of the house; and before I could jump to the ground, the front-door was open, and a tall stiff footman standing on either side of it. The hall was spacious and handsome, with oaken panels, which were decorated with various humane instruments; the musket and bayonet of Christian civilisation being alternated with the shield, spear, and club of heathen barbarism. At the further end, a dark-hued 'buttons' was playing a tune on a bugle; and before I had time to wonder at a servant being allowed to cultivate his musical talents in a spot where he must necessarily annoy the whole household, the most solemn and punctilious of butlers came up to me and said: 'The colonel has given orders, sir, that you are to go to your room at once; that is the dressing-bugle: when you hear the next, you will come down into the drawing-room.' And he ushered me up-stairs into a very comfortable bedroom, whither my luggage had preceded me.

I dressed myself as fast as I could, in hopes of getting a word with Sarah before dinner; and the dearest girl anticipated my wish, for, on opening the drawing-room door, I saw she was there alone.

Time was precious, so the one minute devoted to rapture being over, I said: 'Adored one, can you give me a hint?'

'Yes, you made a favourable impression at Scarborough, and will easily get on; at least I always do. They both spoil me. Never mind a little roughness; they mean nothing. Aunt is the dearest, most lovable, kindest of women, so long as she has her own way, and is not contradicted. She is rather a bigot, so you had better put your liberality in your pocket; and she thinks a good deal of her family—was a Miss Montgomery, and brought this estate to uncle.'

'Ah! and Sir George?'

'Well, you must be very good, and keep your temper. Uncle is a dear, *dear* man, but rather inclined to order people about. You see aunt rules him, so he likes to rule others. His temper is somewhat violent at times, but he soon comes round, if not opposed; and then he tries to atone for what he has said or done while angry. Oh, I almost forgot: above all things, be very punctual; if you are ever late for breakfast or dinner, I will not answer for the consequences; and is there anything else? yes, if you could take snuff, it would please him. There goes the bugle!' And to the tune of *O the Roast Beef of Old England*, Sir George and Lady Potts entered the room.

'Welcome, Mr Pans, to Montgomery Hall,' said the lady, graciously according me her hand.

'How de do? glad to see you,' said the colonel. 'Ready for the birds to-morrow? Have a pinch?'

Mindful of the final hint I had received from Sarah, I accepted the offer, and tried to drop the snuff while pretending, with much noise and apparent enjoyment, to draw it up into my nose; but a few grains more volatile than the rest insisted on making their way in, and I found it necessary to blow that organ.

'Niff, niff. Bless my soul, how disgusting! Niff, niff. What can it be? Why, it is your handkerchief! It's musk! Young man, you are offensive; come with me,' said Sir George.

I am not over-patient by nature, and felt all the blood in my body fly to my face at this insult; but I thought of the stake I was playing for, swallowed my anger, and followed him.

'Throw the thing down; John, take that handkerchief away,' said he, when we had reached the hall. 'This way, Mr Pans;' and he led me into his study, opened a folding washing-stand, poured water into the basin, and said, pointing to it: 'Wash!'

I obeyed him, and we returned to the drawing-room.

'My lady is served,' the butler presently announced; and as he did not speak literally, in which case we should have had but a tough and scraggy dinner, but metaphorically, I offered my arm.

'John,' said Lady Potts to the footman who brought her soup, 'is Flora well enough to come down?'

'No, my lady. Susan has been trying to get her to eat something all day, but the smell of food even seems to go against her.'

'Oh, the poor suffering darling! Oh, the sweet pet! I hope she will not die.'

'I hope she will!' I mentally ejaculated, for a horrible suspicion flashed across my mind. Who was this Flora? a new favourite, an adopted child, destined to cause the dislocation of the principal facial ornament of my beloved Sarah? Dreadful thought, which I drowned in a glass of champagne; for, anyhow, there was the dowry, and even at the very worst, the dinner before me was most excellent, the wines delicious; and was I not by profession an epicurean philosopher?

Blessed dinner! thou one bright spot illuminating the twenty-four hours, cheering alike the clerk at his desk, the soldier on the march, the lawyer in court, the statesman on the benches, the student in his study. Happy, thrice happy are we that our lot has fallen upon a time when thou art still appreciated and rightly understood, for there are evil days coming when teetotallers and vegetarians shall rule over this now merry England, and the surly shall never relax, nor the mean melt into generosity; men's hearts shall not warm towards one another; friendship shall be a rare and despised thing; and a man performing an unselfish action, shall be confined in a lunatic asylum. Painting shall give way to photography; our statues shall wear paletôts and petticoats; and all our music shall be classical.

But at present we live in a benign age; and my hosts grew almost good-tempered under the influence of good cookery and generous wine. Sir John condescended to explain that his aversion to scent arose from the disgust he had acquired for musk-rats in Semetary Island; and Lady Potts grew quite natural, and gave me many minute details of the sagacity of a favourite cat she had once had, whereupon I told her several interesting anecdotes relating to that wofully misunderstood animal, which shall not be confided to an undiscerning public, apt to confound poetical embellishment with want of truthfulness.

I could not manage to enjoy much conversation with my beloved Sarah, but consoled myself with the reflection that if all went well, I should get quite enough before 'death or the poor-law commissioners us did part.'

When the ladies had withdrawn, the colonel ensconced himself in an easy-chair, and began pumping me in so obvious a manner that I had no difficulty in flowing to his entire satisfaction. At the end of about a bottle, he threw his napkin over his head and said:

'Ring when you want more claret; when you have had enough, go to the ladies, and make no noise.'

And presently he snored.

When I entered the drawing-room, I found Sarah asleep on the sofa, and Lady Potts hanging over a basket adorned with pink silk.

'Was it a poor little dear, suffering angel, den! Was a pretty creature with its little brown eyes.'

Flora, doubtless! It was an infant, then, that had thus seduced the affections of the capricious lady from my Sarah—a mere infant! Surely babycide cannot be *very* wrong; one might have an accident and sit on the thing, and nobody be a bit the wiser. Such were my thoughts as I approached the basket, in which, to my intense relief, I saw a very fat, black, and tan spaniel, with long silky hair and very apoplectic eyes.

Forming desires for myself, this death
Does seem the only happy one—to grow
Fat in my heart and stomach, and so lie
Flat on back, and never say a word,
Drawing my breath high up, eating my fill,
And saying: 'Here I die away with pleasure:'

wrote that spiritual poet and philosopher, and Flora had nearly attained this euthanasia.

'What a beautiful dog!' I exclaimed. 'Is it ill?'

'Oh, very, very ill. Poor dear Flora, she has quite lost her appetite, she who always enjoyed her food so! She has eaten nothing to-day but the wing of a chicken and a few macaroons.'

'If you will allow me to examine her, I may be of some service; I am used to dogs. Ah! I see, very short breath, finds it difficult to stand. My dear Lady Potts, if this dog is not attended to, she will die.'

'Oh, Mr Pans. Poor Flora! what shall I do?'

'Well, I think I could save her if she were left entirely in my hands; but, above all things, no one must feed her but myself.'

'Thank you, dear Mr Pans; I will give directions. Oh, I shall be ever grateful to you if you should prove the blessed instrument of restoring my sweet doggy to health again!'

Sarah now woke up and joined us, and we had tea, and conversed on a variety of interesting topics; such as the antiquity of the Montgomery family, the general decay of old county families, and the sad prevalence of 'new men;' the selfishness and ingratitude of the lower classes generally, and the immoral tendency of any efforts to do anything for them: in short, I exerted myself to the utmost of my power to tickle my lady's vanity and self-complacency, and to make her sensible that, while society owed numberless duties towards her, she owed none to society: I flatter myself, I made a considerable impression.

Lady Potts went to the other end of the room for some work, and I whispered to Sarah: 'Will that do?'

'Ah, you dreadful hypocrite; it is quite shocking! I shall never know when to believe you in earnest,' she replied, looking half-frightened, half-amused.

'It is very unpleasant. Nothing but the hope of winning you could make me stoop to such a course of proceeding.'

'O yes; I know it was necessary: indeed, it was I who advised it. But whatever my uncle and aunt's foibles, and however they behave to others, they are most kind to me, and it pains me to see their weak points so drawn out.'

The colonel came in yawning, had a cup of tea, and then told me to get the backgammon-board and play a hit with him; which I did, playing as badly as possible, and never taking him up but once, when I could not help it: on which occasion he got into so violent a passion that I was glad of my previous forbearance; but as I managed to let him gammon me that very game, he soon recovered his, what-I-suppose-he-called good-humour.

Soon the sounds of the bugle were once more heard in the hall.

'There is half-past ten,' cried Sir George. 'Good-night, Mr Pans. Now go to your bedroom. If you want to read, you will find plenty of books, papers, magazines, &c., in the library; and if you wish to smoke, you may.'

Dressing-gowned, slippered, cigared, easy-chaired, paper-knifed, and Edinburgh Reviewed, I was reposing after my labours, dangers, and sufferings, when there came a knock at the door.

'Who is there?'

'Orders, sir.'

'Orders! What is that? Come in.'

A man-servant entered with a book bound in red, and having a brazen clasp, which he opened, and pointed out to me a particular page, from which I read:

'MONTGOMERY HALL, *August* 31, 18—.

'Mr Pans of Lincolnshire, gent., arrived here this day on a visit.—The family will assemble for breakfast to-morrow morning at 8 A.M., in the library.—Colonel Sir George Potts and Mr Pans will go out shooting at 9.30, lunching at Batt's Copse at 1, and returning to dinner at 5.30 P.M.—Miss Potts will ride Mabel at 2 P.M. to-morrow, William attending her on Merriman.—The cook will attend Colonel Sir George Potts in his study immediately after breakfast.—Lady Potts's spaniel Flora is placed under the care of Mr Pans, until further orders.

There were several other directions to different servants concerning their duties, past, present, or to come; but nothing more affecting myself, so I shut the book, and handed it to the servant, who said: 'Lady Potts wishes to know whether you want her brought here, sir.'

'Brought here! Lady Potts! Good heavens! Oh, ah—the spaniel! No, no; let her be taken to the stables. My compliments to Lady Potts, and the smell of horses is part of my system.'

I fancy I detected the ghost of a grin on the man's face as he quitted the room, leaving me oppressed with one fearful fact—breakfast at eight! It hardly seemed worth while to go to bed at all if one was expected to rouse up in the dead of night like that; why, one would have to get up at seven!

However, I considered that other people had done such things, and that what man had done, man could do again; so I turned in. But my sleep was restless and broken, haunted as I was by the idea of having to get up at a stated time; I kept dreaming I was late for breakfast, starting up in a fright, and sinking to sleep again.

Waking after the soundest of these naps, I found daylight streaming in through the window, and leaped out of bed, and into my bath in great alarm, not doubting that I had overslept myself. It was only while towelling my back that I glanced at my watch, and discovered that it was but six o'clock. However, I was wide awake; there was no use in turning in again, so I made up my mind to devote an hour before breakfast to Miss Flora: when I had done dressing, I went down to the stables, meeting on my way the man who had brought me the order-book the night before, carrying up my boots and hot-water, who told me that I should find the dog in the loose box dedicated to Lady Potts's mare. That highly favoured animal was undergoing the morning operation of grooming with great patience and equanimity; fat, mild-eyed, and satincy, the only signs she gave of vitality were an occasional whisk of the tail, and the laziest of imitations of a threat to bite when the groom attacked some peculiarly tender portion of her person, or when a dreamy curiosity incited her to smell Flora, who lay wheezing in the straw hard by.

'Fine morning,' said I to the groom, who was emitting that peculiar sibilation common to stablemen, and which must be so galling to the horses at Astley's if they partake of the sensibilities of biped actors.

'Tis-s-s-s-s—is-s-s-s-s—tis-s-s-s. Ees, sir, tis-s-s-s.'

'Leave off hissing, my lad, and listen to me for a moment, will you? Your lady wants that dog to get well; you know what is the matter with it.'

'Ees.'

'Then you know it only wants less victuals, and more running about.'

'Ees.'

'Well, then, can you keep your mouth shut?'

'Ees' (a broad grin).

'Then here is half a sovereign for you.'

'Thankee, sir' (a broader).

'Don't you give her anything to eat to-day, and whenever you come into the stable, make her move about. I will take her for a walk now. Have you got a collar and a piece of string?'

He soon produced those articles, also a bit of soap.

'A good idea,' said I; and in spite of the tears and supplications of the patient, we administered a saponaceous pill. I then took the fair Flora in my arms, and carried her tenderly through the shrubbery, till we were out of sight of the house, when I put her down, and adjusting the collar and string, invited her to take a waddle; as she declined, I gave the string a pull, but without effect: she did not mind hanging, it was exertion she objected to. So, remembering that persuasion is better than force, I drew a whip from the pocket of my shooting-jacket. Let us draw a veil over the scene. Suffice it, that when she had taken a proper amount of exercise, I took off her collar, and carried her back to the stable.

'I saw you from my window carrying Flora for a walk this morning; how kind of you!' said Lady Potts as I entered the breakfast-room at two minutes before eight, and her eyes were more eloquent than her lips.

Punctually at the appointed minute, Colonel Potts, myself, a gamekeeper, and four dogs started off under a blazing sun for the nearest stubble-field, which we traversed, I on the right, Sir George on the left, the gamekeeper in rear, and the dogs scouring before us; but as there were no birds, we arrived at the other end guiltless of blood. Directly we entered the second field, however, which was also stubble, a dog on the right, that is, immediately in front of me, made a dead point. Cocking both locks, I was advancing cautiously, when I heard hasty footsteps, a panting and puffing, and finally, words spoken in a loud whisper.

'Stop, stop—you, stop!' So I stopped, and the colonel advanced in front of me. It was very trying, but Sarah must not be lost for a shot. Up got the covey; bang, bang, went Sir George, visibly a yard above them.

'Mark them, Thomas; I am sure that old one is hit hard!'

If this was the case, the 'old one' took his punishment like a hero, for he certainly shewed no signs of it as he skimmed away with his spouse and family.

'I always miss my first shot,' growled the colonel, as he reloaded.

The next point was on his beat fairly enough. Again the covey rose; again he blazed away with both barrels harmlessly. Two of the birds, however, who were lazy or greedy, or weak on the wing, delayed getting up with the rest, from whom they had strayed considerably to the right, and were now frightened up by the report. I am only a middling shot; but they were so young, and flew so slowly, that I knocked them both over.

'Hang you, what do you fire at my wounded birds for?' screamed Sir George, foaming with rage.

'Your wounded birds, sir?'

'Yes, sir, my wounded birds! As neat a shot as ever I made in my life—one to each barrel. You could not beat that yourself, Thomas—eh?'

'It was a fair shot, your honour.'

'Do you hear that, sir? Do you hear what the gamekeeper says? You are a jealous shot, sir; and I hate a jealous shot like the blank.'

'But, Sir George,' I expostulated, 'you mistake; I thought the rest of the covey were within range, and fired at *them*.'

'Then you own those to be my birds?'

'Certainly.'

'Oh, ah, hum! Pick them up, Thomas.'

Thomas was very busy lacing one of his boots; when he rose, his face was crimson—from stooping, I suppose.

Next shot he had, the colonel really did hit a bird, which put him in such good-humour that he did not claim the next I bagged; and so we went on till luncheon, the birds being so plentiful, tame, and weak on the wing, that we made a pretty fair bag—the colonel hitting about twice out of every five times, and I managing to palm some of my victims off as his.

In the afternoon, I had better sport, for the coveys being now scattered, the shots became more frequent, while the colonel, upon whom the sun and bottled porter had taken effect, was less ardent than he had been in the morning. Indeed, at last, he declared himself 'done;' and flinging himself down by the side of a spring, which bubbled up in the centre of a nice shady dell, he lit a cheroot, and bade me go on alone with the gamekeeper; when it was time to go home, we found him in the same place, fast asleep.

After dinner that evening, I discovered that Lady Potts had a weakness for table-turning, and I pushed first a hat, and then a small table, round and round, with my thumbs and forefingers, in conjunction with hers and Sarah's, professing all the while intense astonishment at the rotatory motion assumed by those articles, and grew in my hostess's grace perceptibly. Next morning, I again rose early, again treated Flora to a little gentle exercise on an empty stomach, and again went out shooting with the colonel.

This time I kept close to him all day, and whenever an occasion offered, fired simultaneously, and vowed that he had hit, and I had missed, for that I had seen the bird I aimed at fly away; this I did with expressions of vexation and impatience, which nearly threw poor Thomas into an apoplexy with suppressed laughter, while the colonel positively chuckled with triumphant delight.

So we went on, the old people liking me, and I hating them, more and more every day; Sarah growing more and more beautiful and cheerful as cause for anxiety seemed to diminish; and Flora rapidly regaining health and symmetry under a course of biscuit and whip. Indeed, at the end of a week, I allowed an interview between dog and mistress; and so delighted was the lady with the recovery of her favourite, that I obtained that very evening my first earnest of ultimate success.

'I wish to speak to you before you give the orders,' said Lady Potts to Sir George, when we broke up for the night; and when the order-book, with the brazen clasp, came round to my bedroom door, I read the following sentence:

'Mr Pans will attend Miss Sarah Potts in her ride at 2.30 P.M. to-morrow.'

Before pheasant-shooting began, I returned to London like a good bill, accepted. Ere the last long-tail had fallen, my banker's account rose from two figures to four, and I was the blest proprietor of the angelic being who is now taking such a preposterous time about putting on her—— I mean *my* bonnet.

I may be considered as a sort of matrimonial snipe, having got my wife by suction.

Has my moral character suffered, I wonder? I think, perhaps, it would be less unpleasant to pick a pocket or swindle a tradesman, than it might have been a year ago; but in revenge, I am less likely to be tempted to commit such acts; and if I respect myself a little less, all my acquaintances respect me a great deal more.

Why, you may do almost anything for a large fortune, just as you may commit any crime from perjury to treason and murder for a kingdom, and never lose caste. But, then, you must be successful.

CO-OPERATION.

For many years—how many, political economists are best able to say—there has been submitted to the thinking section of society a commercial problem which numbers of able men have endeavoured in vain to solve. It is, in the words of John Stuart Mill, 'how to obtain the efficiency and economy of production on a large scale, without dividing the producers into two parties with hostile interests, employers and employed, the many who do the work being mere servants under the one who supplies the funds, and having no interest of their own in the enterprise, except to fulfil their contract and earn their wages.' In other words, it resolves itself into a question as to the relative merits of co-operation and competitive trade.

Partial endeavours have been made from time to time to crack this social nut; as, for instance, in the case of a few English and American shipowners, who have made it their custom to give each sailor an interest in the profit of the voyage: in the mines of Cornwall, where it is customary for gangs of workmen to contract with the agent, who represents the owner of the mine, to execute a certain portion of a vein, and fit the ore for market at so much in the pound of the sum for which the ore is sold: but more especially in the establishment of M. Leclaire, a Parisian house-painter, who many years ago introduced the first germs of the true co-operative system amongst his workmen. The plan adopted by M. Leclaire was, shortly, this: he employed on an average some 200 workmen, whom he paid in the usual manner by fixed wages or salaries. He assigned to himself, besides interest for his capital, a fixed allowance for his labour and responsibility as manager, and at the end of each year the surplus profits were divided amongst the whole body of workmen, himself included, in the proportion of their fixed salaries.

So far, this was a step in the right direction; but it has remained for a few Lancashire flannel weavers, by carrying out this co-operative system to its full extent, to offer the most satisfactory solution of the difficult problem; and it is with the history of these earnest working-men that we have at present to do.

Some fourteen years ago, a dozen of these poor weavers out of employ, and nearly out of food, and quite out of heart with their social state, as their historian (to whose pamphlet upon the subject we are indebted for our information) informs us, met together to discover what could be done to better their industrial condition. The result of their deliberations was, that—wonderfully strong in purpose, though weak in funds—they determined to supersede tradesmen, mill-owners, and capitalists, by the establishment of a system of trade upon strict co-operative principles. The better to accomplish this, they formed themselves into the society which has since achieved such signal success, as 'The Rochdale Equitable Pioneer Society,' and commenced business with the magnificent subscription of twopence each per week.

If their capital was small, however, their views were of the largest, for we find it resolved at their first meeting, that, 'as a further benefit and security to the members of this society, the society shall purchase or rent an estate or estates of land, which shall be cultivated by the members who may be out of employment, or whose labour may be badly remunerated;' followed by the trifling assertion, which we are sorry to say has not been as yet accomplished, 'that, as soon as practicable, this society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education, and government; or, in other words, to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests, or assist other societies in establishing such colonies.' The other and more sober resolutions, however, which were passed at this first meeting, and to which the society have subsequently, with some slight modifications, adhered, were, 'the establishment of a store for the sale of provisions, clothing, &c.;' 'the building, purchasing, or erecting a number of houses, in which those members desiring to assist each other in improving their domestic and social condition may reside;' the manufacture of such articles as the society may determine upon, for the employment of such members as may be without employment, or who may be suffering in consequence of repeated reductions in their wages;' and, as a minor proposition, 'for the promotion of sobriety, the opening of a temperance hotel in one of the society's houses as soon as convenient.'

Twenty-eight pounds having been with difficulty collected towards the furtherance of these objects, the Equitable Pioneers commenced operations by the opening of a very scantily furnished store in the ground-floor of a warehouse in Toad Lane, Rochdale, to the intense amusement of the 'doffers,' who, after the manner of *gamins* in general, made themselves merry at the expense of what they were pleased to call 'Towd weyvurs shop.'

They had, as might be expected, many difficulties to contend with, and much local prejudice to overcome. The same ever-ready body of objectors who hail any innovation upon old-established custom as a hungry pack of hounds might greet a fox, were to be found in Rochdale, as they are to be met with everywhere, and were down upon the Equitable Pioneers savagely. In despite of all resistance, however, the society gradually progressed, until, at the close of the year 1845, one year after its commencement, it numbered eighty members, and possessed a capital of L.181, 12s. 3d. This success naturally incited the Pioneers to further efforts, and we find it then decided that a capital of L.1000 should be raised for the establishment of the store. This was to be effected by the creation of L.1 shares, of which each member should be required to hold four, and no more. As an instance of the very practical way in which the society went about its business in collecting this fund, we may mention 'that each member on his admission-night had to appear personally in the meeting-room, and state his willingness to take out four shares of L.1 each, and to pay a deposit of not less than threepence per week after, and to allow all interest and profits that might be due to him to remain in the funds until the amount was equal to four shares in the capital.' We might recommend this principle to some other societies of which we have heard.

Having succeeded in raising the additional capital, the operations of the society were so far extended that the members at this time recklessly decided upon indulging in a dinner at one shilling per head to celebrate the event, and doubtless enjoyed themselves to the full extent of that extravagant expenditure. We gather after this—some people might treat it as the natural consequence of a one-shilling dinner—that the views of the society, though still continuing substantially the same as at first, became somewhat modified. Let us endeavour more particularly to describe what these views were.

The founders of the society—we quote from the pamphlet—were opposed to capital 'absorbing all profit arising from trade, and to hit upon a plan that should give proportionally the gain to the persons who make it, was their object. After much discussion of the question, the plan of dividing profit on purchase was proposed—that is, after paying expenses of management, interest on capital invested at a rate per cent., that the remaining profits should be divided quarterly among the members in proportion to their purchases or dealings with the society.' This, and the plan, which cannot be sufficiently commended, of making every transaction a ready-money transaction, and never, under any circumstances, countenancing the system of credit, were originally, and still continue to be, the leading features of the Rochdale Co-operative Store. There are many minor matters which we gather from the pamphlet; as, for instance, 'that the Pioneers providently established early in their career a redemption fund, which consists of the accumulation of entrance-fees of 1s. each from each member, and which fund serves as a reserve to meet the depreciation of the fixed stock, so that in all financial reports a broad allowance being made for depreciation of stock, and the fixed capital at stock-taking being always estimated below its real value, it is calculated that if the society broke up, every subscriber of L.1 would receive 25s. as his dividend.' Among many other excellent rules, it is enacted 'that the board of directors may suspend any member whose conduct is considered to be injurious to the society, and a general meeting may expel him. —That any co-operative society can buy of the Rochdale Society through one of its members, who, however, must become a member of the Equitable Pioneer Society.—That a member being in distress, may withdraw any sum he may have in the funds of the society, above L.2, at the discretion of the board of directors.'

There is one feature of the society, however, to which we should wish to draw especial attention; it is the reservation of a portion of the funds for educational purposes. 'The 2½ per cent.,' says the pamphlet, 'of their quarterly profits assigned for division among the members, together with the fines accruing from the infraction of rules, constitute a separate and distinct fund, called the "Educational Fund," for the intellectual improvement of the members of the store, the maintenance and extension of the library—the entrance to which, it may be mentioned, is free, and where some of the best and most expensive books published are to be found—and such other means of instruction as may be considered desirable.' Thus, from 1850 to 1855, we find that a school for young persons was conducted at a charge of twopence per month; and that, since that period, a room has been granted by the board for the use of from twenty to thirty persons, from the ages of fourteen to forty, for mutual and other instruction, on Sundays and Tuesdays.

To come to matters commercial. The society, we find, is divided into seven departments—grocery, drapery, butchering, shoemaking, clogging, tailoring, and wholesale. A separate account is kept of each business, and a general account is given each quarter, shewing the position of the whole.

The grocery business was commenced, as we have stated, in December 1844, with only four articles to sell. It now includes whatever a grocer's shop should include. The drapery business was started in 1847, with no very great attractions; in 1854, it was erected into a separate department. In 1846, the store began to sell butcher's meat; and the society now kill three oxen, eight sheep, and sundry porkers and calves, which are, on an average, converted into L.130 of cash per week. Shoemaking commenced in 1852, as also clogging and tailoring. The wholesale department commenced in 1855. This last is an important development of the system, and deserving of more particular mention. 'It has been created,' we learn, 'for supplying any member requiring large quantities, and with a view to supply the co-operative stores of Lancashire and Yorkshire, whose small capitals do not enable them to buy in the best markets, nor command the services of what is otherwise indispensable to every store—a good buyer.' We gather from this that the Rochdale store is now regarded as a parent source. It guarantees—no slight matter in these days—purity, quality, fair prices, standard weight and measure, but all on the never-failing principle—cash-payment.

Having stated that the society is duly registered under the 13th and 14th Vict., cap. 115, we have given a condensed and very imperfect epitome of its leading features. Let us now speak of its success. Taking the annual balance-sheets as the most satisfactory criterion of this, we find, as we have previously stated, that one year after its commencement, the store numbered eighty members, with a capital of L.181, 12s. 3d.; that the amount of annual cash-sales in store was L.710, 6s. 5d.; that the receipts per week in the December quarter were L.30; and that the amount of annual profit was L.32, 17s. 6d. In turning to the accounts of 1857, we find that there were 1850 members, with a capital of L.15,142, 1s. 2d.; that the amount of cash-sales in store were, annually, L.79,788; the receipts per week in December quarter, L.1491; and the annual profit, L.5470, 6s. 8½d. These facts speak in very eloquent language for themselves. If they are not sufficient to convince us of the success attained by the Equitable Pioneers, however, we find that the returns will be much higher for 1858, as the balance-sheet for the first quarter shews an increase of more than L.10,000 for the year, for the store alone.

It is not many years since it was gravely stated that 'mechanical arts succeeded best under a total suppression of sentiment and reason, and that a habit of moving the hand and foot being independent of either, a workshop might be compared to an engine, the parts of which were men.' If any proof were wanting to convince us that the mechanics of the present day are made of very different stuff to what they were when these words were written, we should find it in the fact, that these poor Rochdale weavers, of their own counsel, and by their own steady purpose, have, from such very small beginnings, attained such great success.

It is true that many co-operative stores have been tried, and—with the exception of the Leeds Corn Mill Society, the Padiham Co-operative Manufacturers, and the Galashiels Co-operators—without having achieved so signal a triumph; but we take it, it will be found that they have failed through no defect in the system itself, but have all been wrecked upon the same shoal, so carefully avoided by the Equitable Pioneers—credit.

We will conclude in the words of one to whom the working-classes are indebted for much instruction and support—merely premising that what is here expressed as an opinion, has, in the case of the Rochdale weavers, been amply realised as a grateful fact. 'I think, moreover,' says Mr W. R. Greg, 'that these co-operative associations may be one of the most powerful of the many influences now at work for the education of the lower orders of the people; and that wisdom will be gained, if not wealth [we have seen, however, that wealth may safely be included], from the industry, self-control, and mutual forbearance needed to conduct them.'

ONE LESS.

SILENT we stood by the window,
Watching the twilight fall,
Till the cool gray shadows of evening
Had gathered over all.

And now the lamp has been lighted,
And the fire burns warmly and bright,
How sadly our thoughts still wander
Without to the cold dark night.

There are children playing around us,
As in many a bygone year,
But one little voice is missing,
Which we never more shall hear.

The parlour is warm and lightsome,
But without, how the night-winds rave!
And we think of the darkness falling
Round a little lonely grave.

A. D. L.

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A SHORT STREET.

To span, to grasp, to delineate the great Babylon! If the Thames were ink instead of foul water, and the Monument a pen in the guidance of a powerful mind capacious enough to wield it, it would exhaust the one to the 'verdant mud,' and wear out the other to the stump or pedestal, to tell the millionth part of the story of London and its inhabitants. It may be very well to throw a loose glance, as if from the cross of St Paul's, over the vast theatre and its moving myriads, seeing nothing distinctly of the human ant-hills and emmets stirring about so furiously, and toiling and struggling below. There is wonder enough for grand description in that one *coup d'œil*, but it must be imaginative and Asmodean; and, matter-of-fact man as I am, even one of the longer thoroughfares would be too much for my photographic, not panoramic, ken. The weary Strand would wreck my voyage; the shop-clad Oxford Street I must leave to a Clarendon Press; the butcherly Whitechapel, to the newspaper writers of 'thrilling' tales; turtle-tainted Bishopsgate Street, to the benefit of clergy; and Piccadilly—ah, would it were worthy of its pastoral name and floral associations!—to its displays of fashion and mysteries of politics; for the Haymarket has ceased to exhibit hay, Hedge Lane has disappeared, and Peccadilloes disgrace the scene where childhood and innocence whilom sported amid kindred blossoms.

I must choose a smaller subject for my microscope. Well, here is a short street, though called 'Great,' to distinguish it from a namesake or continuation inscribed 'Little;' but Little has nearly thirty tenements, and Great not fifty. The two run across a famous and perplexing circus yclept the Seven Dials, a much-frequented, though not very aristocratic or fashionable locality. It was here the poor French emigrant dwelt, who described it as the seven D—ls, where every street ran away from each other, and he dined sumptuously for a penny on 'Ca'-me—not very fat, but very good meat though.' A poor author must be interested in such a spot, and behold me surveying it!

The first thing that struck me in the general aspect of the place was the number and variety of animals, principally birds, which were exposed for sale at about an average of every fifth shop, but in several cases two or three close together, and forming a perfect menagerie of discordant music, noise, and clamour. These denizens of the grove, the kennel, the tropics, the rivers, the earth, the eyry, the pond, the road-side, the dwelling-house, and the ruin, composed a curious aggregate; and it seemed equally strange that they could all live in such quarters, or that anybody could live by them. Imagine hundreds of cages, many of them but three or four inches square, filled with canaries, larks, linnets, and every variety of singing-bird; some with single tenants, and some with a dozen or a score, all in motion, and making some sort of sound, from a chirrup to a note, and a whistle to a scream. In the next assortment, pigeons and rabbits prevailed the most, and were silent. Not so game-cocks and their ladies, dunghills and their partlets, bantams and their wee partners. Here moaned the turtle-doves, and, closely adjoining, grunted the guinea-pigs. Here the swift hawk darted his bold eye, and at his elbow, a box of slow tortoises cared not for his imperious glance; neither, indeed, did the smallest finch that perched within a pounce of his wire-restricted claws. There was great equality and perfect independence throughout the whole territory. If not the Happy Family, they could not get at one another to quarrel, which, considering the (reputed) opiate means taken to make the family happy, is probably the happier condition of the two. With skill to purchase—but that might be unnecessary, as one of the merchants assured me that all there was 'upon honour'—you might apparently possess yourself of the articles cheaper than I expected. For example, a lively young lark, with a turf to boot, could not be very dear at the market-price of 6d.; a cock-linnet, warranted, 3d.; a canary in full song, 3s. 6d. (in genteeler quarters, where they are bred so taper as to pass through ladies' rings, they cost guineas, and don't sing so flush); a bullfinch, 5s. 6d.; turtle, 5s.; fantail pigeons, 5s.; jacobins, 5s.; and carriers, 10s. a pair. Parrots, to be sure, had no fixed price. Free-trade—when the greys were in office—had been the ruin of that green crop and yellow monopoly. The rabbits also, a numerous colony, were of uncertain value, from half-a-crown to a sovereign. To the latter estimate belonged a large couple, with ears that would have done honour to a jackass for length, and which drooped like a weeping willow; these were pronounced remarkably cheap in consequence of the female having a 'dewlap' about the size of an orange, which I mistook for a disagreeable and killing tumour, upon her throat. I did not inquire the price of the live rats, of which there were plenty; nor of the terrier dogs, for whose entertainment, as well as the entertainment of their brutal masters, they (the varmint) are believed, in the domain of St Giles, to have been created. The exposure of dogs was not equivalent to a pack of hounds; but if I might judge from barkings and howlings heard ever and anon from sundry cellars, there was no scarcity of the animal within a hundred yards of the Seven Dials; and, indeed, the cellars thereabouts are low and deep enough for any secret purpose, bestial or human. The houses are of the age of London, 1660 to 1720 A.D.; and the descending stairs to these inferior parts are from ten to twelve steep steps. They have no areas, so that all their treasures and virtues must be confined within. One robin-redbreast in sad moult touched my heart more nearly than all the rest of the pining prisoners; and I bethought me of the ancient ballad:

Now in there came my Lady Wren,
  Wi' mony a sigh and groan:
'Oh, what care I for ony bird,
  If my dear Bob be gone?'

Then Robin turned him round about,
  Even like a little king:
'Go, pack ye out of my chamber-door,
  Ye little cutty quean!'

It would truly be a dismal scene here if Robin were to die, and

All the birds in this street
Fall a sighing and sobbing
When they heard the (muffin) bell toll
For poor Cock Robin!

But no such catastrophe taking place, I may return to my live-stock as dispersed about this strange nursery. There are buckets full of snails, not to make soup for consumptive buyers, but for larks; and there are baskets full of meal-worms, maggots, brandlings, and other baits for fishermen, of which anon. And there are multitudes of fish of many kinds, already caught—gold and silver, roach and dace, sticklebacks and minnows, the last to be had single in tiny glass globes at a penny apiece, and efts, and shells, and aquatic weeds, to fit up vivariums in the deftest manner. To be sure, the lady who sold these novelties in very old troughs at 5s. or 6s. each, called them wivehairyhums; which nomenclature I recommend to the notice of the philological disputants *in articulo aquarii.* Birds' nests, silk-worms, false eyes, and fifty indescribable things, of appearances and uses unknown and unimaginable, filled up the measure of this *omnium gatherum,* confined to a single short street, within a stone's throw of busy commercial and fashionable resorts; but, I dare to state, seldom visited or seen by eminent mercantile men or leading persons of fashion.

Yet there are other attractions, some of which might even challenge the notice of 'the upper ten thousand.' There is, for example, a curiosity-shop, in the dusty window of which I observed a pair of 'Ormolo Candlestix,' at the small charge of 18s.; and there were old broken china, and cracked glasses and pictures of uncertificated schools, which, if they had been in a Bernal sale, might have fetched I cannot tell how much. Here the entire collection might be had for an old song; and there was a ballad and cheap-press periodical office next door, as if to simplify the transaction. This shop consisted chiefly of publications of quite opposite tendencies to the intellectual, scientific, or religious classes. In truth, the literature of the site was not first-rate. The one book-stall, or tray, exhibited volumes tattered enough to afford proof of having at some time or other been thought worthy of the study of scholars; and the torn and greasy condition of the whole lot bore witness to the propriety of the librarian's sign-board title of 'Miscellaneous Dealer;' which was further guaranteed by a display of every species of old iron and brass, from rusty screw-nails, hammers, and pincers, to snuffers, pans, and dog-collars.

The luxuries of the population hereabouts are more than sufficiently furnished by cigar and tobacco shops, redolent of the stench of smouldering green vegetables, which is emitted from dirty and contorted mouths; and by public-houses and (at the corners) gin-palaces, the frequenters of which, male and female, are distinguishable by sottish looks and cadaverous complexions. The necessaries, if they may be so called, are supplied by little dens where everything looks faded and withered, as if stolen from bountiful mother-earth a month ago; semi-grocery, semi-confectionery goods so fly-polluted and unclean, that it is astonishing to see even the youngest of the natives—and there are rucks of them in possession of every flag of the pavement—enticed to look upon the sugared filth with greedy eyes; *ter, terque beati* if they can snatch a bull's-eye or lollypop; and one rather roomy repository of cows' heads, sheep's heads, liver, strange scraps of cuttings from what part of an animal impossible to conjecture, and skewers of cats' meat. Of butcher, excepting this; of baker, excepting the confectioner pastry; and of fishmonger, excepting the minnow and eft dealers, the return is *nil.* Yet there are more places than one for the sale of fishing-rods and tackle, at which I looked with considerable surprise. It arose in my mind to inquire: 'Do Cockneys ever catch fish, and when, and where?' and if they do, this seems to be about the last resort where they would seek the means.

I have now but to touch upon the clothing-establishments, and conclude. The number, stock, and quality of old boot and shoe shops are quite extraordinary. It would seem as if there were no new shoes in the world, and that all the worn-out specimens were piled up here. To find feet for them to fit, is far beyond the perplexity of a Chinese puzzle, and yet they are ticketed with the valiant names of Blucher and Wellington, descending all the way to highlows and slippers.* The rival *costumiers* are the o' clo' and rag and bone shops—defended right and left by barbers' poles and notices of 'Shave for a half-penny'—from which scarecrows might be equipped in a style to frighten all the birds in the street. No wonder that the inhabitants are squalid and filthy, the men ragged, the women slattern, the children naked, unwashed, unkempt, rickety, and ignorant. It is a painful spectacle in the midst of a civilised and Christian community.

About the centre, an undertaker's, with coffin and the insignia of burial at his door and in his windows, suggests that there is an end to this sad state, and that the poor, uneducated, idly industrious, and intemperately dissolute, must also, in God's good time, pass to that abode where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. And here I am brought to the domicile which first attracted my notice to this locality, and led me to sketch this picture of a very small spot of London-life. In the centre of dusky boards, which serve the office of glass in a wide window, a hideous, grinning, human ogre-like skull arrested my eye and steps. The dried head of a horse and the dried head of a ram kept it company; and the novelty caused me to wonder what these signs could portend. An inscription informed me that the owner of these deadly symbols was a 'Stuffer, and taught the art in three easy lessons' (Who would not go to school? It beats writing in six lessons, and a language in three weeks!); that 'Dogs were treated for all diseases;' that the 'Artist' was an 'Articulator of human bones, and Repairs done;' and finally, the previous remark was repeated in more general terms, 'Canine treated for all diseases.' At the next meeting of the British Association, and in section of Natural History, I said to myself, I will recommend this ingenious fellow to the patronage of Professor Owen; and meanwhile will make it known to the public at large, that whosoever needs to have his or her bones repaired or articulated, may apply for the job to Great St Andrew's Street, Seven Dials!—unacknowledged namesake of the patron saint of Scotland!

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* I was told that the larger portion of these stores consisted of charitable gifts to barefoot beggars, who forthwith sold them to 'translators,' to be vamped up for the market of the community.

When so minute a bit of the capital supplies a *multum in parvo* far exceeding the features marked on my loose canvas, am I not warranted in fancying that a map and *catalogue raisonné* of the whole metropolis would exhaust the powers of pen and ink and paper!

THE NEW WAY OF PAYING OLD DEBTS WON'T DO.

Some time ago, we called attention to an ingenious way of getting rid of old and troublesome debts, which consisted in the apparently legal device of visiting Scotland, and there, after a short and agreeable residence, passing through an obscure Bankruptcy Court. The discovery of the law which permitted an Englishman to wipe out his pecuniary obligations in this easy fashion, threatened to bring certain towns in the north into an unenviable degree of notoriety. The would-be bankrupts not being particularly fond of publicity, made a judicious choice of residence. They pitched on places having a resident sheriff and solicitors, but not possessed of a newspaper or reporters for the press. The most favourite localities were Tobermory in Mull, Portree in Skye, and Stornoway in the still more distant island of Lewis—places which in certain seasons timid persons would consider to be about as difficult to reach as if situated in Nova Scotia, and to which it was not very likely the ordinary class of creditors from England would think of following them. Some refugees did not even take the trouble of going so far as the Hebrides. In the pleasant little town of Peebles, an hour and a half by rail from Edinburgh, they found every requisite for carrying through their bankruptcy in as unostentatious a way as could be desired, while the place had the additional recommendation of offering good angling in the Tweed during the statutory period of forty days required to constitute an illusory residence.

When speaking of this monstrous legal abuse, we hinted that certain English creditors, possibly under some feeling of exasperation, had encountered the trouble and expense of objecting, on technical grounds, to a Tobermory bankruptcy; but at the time we wrote, the case in question was in dependence in the higher civil Scotch courts, and only now is it decided. According to this decision—one of the most sensible we have seen for a long time—English insolvents will no longer be able to go through a sham bankruptcy in Scotland; however sad their needs, the thing won't do. If they wish to become bankrupts, they must stay at home, and submit to the usual process. We need not recapitulate all the facts of the contested case; they may be seen in the newspapers of the day. The insolvent was William Gill, designated as barrister-at-law, having chambers in Lincoln's Inn, London. He had gone to Tobermory to pass through the Bankruptcy Court; Mr Joel, one of his English creditors, conceiving that the proceedings were irregular, presented a petition to the Court of Session, to have the bankruptcy recalled; and this, after some proceedings, has been effected. The bankruptcy is pronounced to be incompetent. The Lord Ordinary, in giving his decision, appends a long note of explanation; the substance of which is, that the applicant for bankruptcy must have his regular domicile in Scotland; jurisdiction being constituted after a residence of forty days—'a jurisdiction arising in the natural course of events, and not the fruit of a device to support the application.' As we presume this will turn out to be good law, there may be said to be an end to the flight of English insolvents into Scotland. The promising harvest of law-business in Tobermory and elsewhere has once and for ever received a check; at least, we do not think that any fresh case is likely to occur. That Mr Joel—of whom we know nothing—deserves the thanks of the mercantile community for having interposed to arrest what was becoming a great public scandal, every one will allow; nor can we doubt that the successful issue of his operations will stimulate other creditors to recall those bankruptcies which have already passed unchallenged through the local Scottish courts.

One cannot pass from this by no means attractive subject without feeling that the continuance of distinctions in the legal usages of England and Scotland is alike inconvenient and detrimental. Why, at all events, is not every proper opportunity embraced of assimilating the mercantile law of the two countries, now that they are so thoroughly united socially? Why should there be one kind of bankrupt law in Carlisle, and another in the not far-distant Scottish town, Dumfries? Strange, that the impolicy of the present state of things does not force itself on the attention of the legislature. Without any prejudice in favour of the new Scottish bankrupt law, we believe it to be more simple and much more cheaply administered than that of England; and these recommendations have, perhaps, something to do in attracting undomiciled insolvents. That the English law is in some respects defective and unpopular, may be inferred from the fact, that a bill to remodel it is now before parliament; yet, from all we can learn, the projected changes will not assimilate the law to that which prevails in the northern part of the island. In the debates in parliament on the proposed new English bankrupt act, the law, as it exists in Scotland, was not so much as mentioned; nor is there any chance that uniformity in any single particular will be attempted. To the great inconvenience and perplexity of the mercantile community, there will still be two distinctly different laws, referring to one and the same kind of business, for England and Scotland.

'D. T.'

A STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—AT HOME.

The prospect offered by his Christmas hearth awoke no lively anticipations in Mark Harrup's breast. His pace slackened as he drew nearer home; it was now broad daylight, and people were moving about the streets with bright faces and cheery speech befitting the day. Turning the corner of a street leading out of the Blackfriar's Road, Mark suddenly encountered the owner of a certain face that was second to none in its hearty good-humour. Rounding the corner at the same moment, the two men had almost run into each other's arms ere they knew what they were about.

'Hollo! hollo! Why, bless my soul, if it ain't you, Harrup!' The speaker, a short, good-looking man, with a fustian jacket and big whiskers, carried a large sirloin of beef in one arm, and a small child in the other. 'Who'd ha' thought o' seein' you, mate! Dash it, I half thought it was your ghost. When did you leave the 'ospital? Never knew you was out again till this minute.'

'Left it this morning,' was Mark's brief reply to his old friend and fellow-workman at the mills.

'Well, I'm right glad to see you out again,' said

John Thorne, in a voice that spoke volumes for his sincerity. 'It's been a bit of a warnin' to you, Mark —eh? Don't yer travel that road any more; it won't pay, anyhow.'

Mark looked anywhere but in his neighbour's face, and turned very red.

'It's been a bad time for your missus and the bairns, Harrup; but if you ain't been home yet, you wants to be off to 'em; so good-day to you, my lad, and good-luck to you;' and John Thorne strode along with his dinner and his baby as before.

Mark's heart turned hot within him: the sight of his old companion's happiness and respectability—John Thorne earned less wages, and was accounted a less-skilful workman than himself—stirred up feelings of envy and hate.

'Curse his impudence! If he *had* been his friend for twenty years, he'd no right to talk in that way: he wanted none of his advice, and he'd let him know it.' Chewing the above reflections, Mark's temper grew so hot and fiery, that he was constrained to enter a public-house to allay the feverish symptoms. Coming out again, the church-bells at the end of the street began to ring for service. Not caring to meet the church-goers, and feeling still a peculiar antipathy to all tintinnabulary sounds, Mark went back into the public-house, and refreshed himself once more; then, issuing forth again, made a *détour* by streets free from the above inconveniences, and so at length reached his home. Pushing open the street-door common to all the lodgers in the house, Mark mounted a dirty staircase, and ascended to the third floor. Arrived there, he stood a moment in hesitation with his hand on the lock; then turned it, and his home was before him. It was such a home as belongs to hundreds of men cursed with his habits —a garret-chamber, sordid and ugly; meagre furniture; a meagre fire, and two meagre children endeavouring to warm themselves thereat; a baby crying in its cradle; and a jaded wife preparing a meal at a rickety table.

'You didn't expect me just yet,' said Mark, as a cry of surprise broke from his wife's lips—'no, no more did I, last night, expect to be here to-day. It's a new medicine's done it; only one trial, and cured directly.'

This brief explanation might not have satisfied every one, delivered, too, as it was with stammering lips and downcast looks; but he knew that his wife would not care to be informed by what agency her husband was thus suddenly restored to her—enough for her that he was there.

'O Mark!' she cried, bursting into hysterical tears, and flinging her arms round his neck, 'I'm so thankful—I'm so thankful! Sometimes I've thought I'd never see you come back home any more.'

'There—that'll do, that'll do,' said Mark, shaking off her embrace, and sitting down on a rush-bottomed chair.

'I couldn't ha' touched food this day, Mark, if you'd been lying yonder; the thought had took away all my appetite. I was making the children a plum-pudding; but I'll run and get a bit of steak, and soon get you a dinner ready.'

The term 'plum,' applied to the pudding, was a mere matter of courtesy to half-a-dozen raisins employed in its manufacture; it was the most palpable evidence of poverty the room afforded.

'Come and kiss your father, children,' continued Mrs Harrup, putting on her shawl; 'I'll be back directly, Mark.'

Little Jack and Fanny Harrup advanced as bidden; their greetings were soon over, and then they retired to mind the baby's cradle, casting furtive glances at 'father' from out their dark eyes. His presence awoke no enthusiasm in their infantine minds. Beyond a desire to know where his beard had come from, Jack looked as though he felt no particular interest in his parent; while Fanny was evidently only curious to know whether he would eat all the steak or not.

Mrs Harrup was soon back again, bestirring herself to make matters comfortable. It was surprising how soon a light heart and good will enabled one pair of hands to work a change. The furniture certainly was not susceptible of much improvement. No ingenuity on Mrs Harrup's part could hide the frowsiness of the chair-bottoms, or the decrepitude of the table-legs; but a clean cloth was spread, all the crockery of the establishment produced, the hearth swept, the baby appeased, and the fire stirred up and replenished, till little Jack and Fanny might have thought, from the novelty of the sight, that their mother was about to cook an ox instead of a steak.

Mark beheld the preparations in silence. When they were at an end, and the dinner eaten—it had not improved the man's appetite to recall that it had been purchased by his wife's earnings, and not his—he rose from the table, and reached down his pipe and tobacco-box from the chimney-piece.

'No baccy,' he muttered, looking into the empty tin.

'If I'd known, Mark, you would have been here to-day, I'd have had it filled,' said his wife. 'I'll run, though, and beg some of Mrs Thorne; I know she'll lend us some.'

'Stay here! I ain't goin' a beggin' to John Thorne's wife. Here, Jack, run to old Snuffham's, and fetch me threepenny worth.' He threw a fourpenny-piece on the table, and the little fellow hastened away.

Some time elapsed ere he was heard mounting the stairs again. There was a pause, then the child opened the door with a frightened, tearful face.

'Please, father, I—I'—— Jack burst into tears.

'Ain't you got it?' demanded Mark.

Yes, he had got it, screwed up there in the gray paper in his hand.

'Where's the change?' asked the father—a suspicion of what had happened crossing his mind.

'I—I dropped it in the gutter, and it rolled—rolled'——

'Take that, you young dog,' cried Mark, dealing the child a cuff on the head. 'I'll teach you to lose money.'

'O father, don't, don't!' interposed the wife. 'He didn't mean to do it. It's Christmas-day; don't be angry with him.'

'What the devil do I care what day it is?' returned Mark. 'We've got no pennies to throw away. Come, hold that row, and give over blubbering.'

Thus admonished, Jack's sobs grew louder, and were only stifled by his mother thrusting her apron over his mouth, and smuggling him into the adjoining room, where he was heard moaning drearily for some time to come.

Mark filled his pipe, and began to smoke, his temper not improved by the above incident. He sat and stared morosely at the fire, and wondered how it was he felt no happier by his own hearth than he had done on a sick-bed.

Mrs Harrup, meanwhile, went on with her work, and then, when all was cleared away, and the kettle placed on the hob for tea, sent Fanny to join her brother, and came and sat down by her husband's side.

'Mark, what is it makes you so down-hearted? You don't seem glad to get home again.'

He puffed away at his pipe, but made no reply.

'It isn't the money you're troubling about, is it, Mark? You'll soon get into work again now. We've got through the worst o' things, and if—if'—

she hesitated a moment—'if you'll only put your shoulder to the wheel, we'll soon see ourselves righted.'

Mark said not a word.

'It's been a hard time for us,' continued his wife, 'since you have been badly; but, thank God! we've got on somehow. I haven't had a penny from the club all the time you've been ill, for they said the subscriptions hadn't been paid up. I don't know what we'd have done without friends. I was obliged to borrow half a sovereign last week, to get bread and coals. It was lent cheerful enough, though I told 'em I couldn't pay it till you got into work again. Mark, you—you will try to leave off the drink, and be comfortable, won't you? I know'—here her voice quivered—'I know I'm often cross-tempered and soon put out now-a-days; but oh, Mark, if you'd only try to be like what you were when we married, I think I'd grow more like myself again.' She passed her hand across her eyes, and then went on again: 'They say, Mark, you're cleverer at your work than most men. John Thorne says you're a vast sight handier than he is, and might ha' been foreman o' the works by this time, if you'd only been steady. Think, husband, what a heaven his home is to ours! And think of his children and of yours!'

Whilst Mrs Harrup was uttering these words, Mark's blood beat fast, and his choler rose. As she ceased, he sprang from his chair, and, with an oath, flung down his pipe amongst the ashes under the grate.

'John Thorne's at the bottom o' this! He's been setting you to preach to me, has he? You've been telling him and his wife some nice stories, I s'pose, since I've been yonder. What does he mean by giving me his advice! I'll teach him not to meddle with my business.'

'I've told them nothing but what everybody in the street knows,' said Mrs Harrup, with sudden warmth. 'John Thorne's the last man, I think, you ought to abuse; it was him who lent me the half-sovereign!'

Mark Harrup gave a bound. 'John Thorne lent you half a sovereign!' he cried, in a towering passion.

'Yes; and without it we might have starved, and, for aught you cared, would ha' done. When you went into hospital, there wasn't a penny to take o' your wages; it had all gone in drink. There was only two half-crowns in the house; and if I hadn't slaved like a horse, day and night, we'd ha' been in the streets afore now.'

Mrs Harrup flung the words at her husband without pity. For a moment Mark's lips quivered impotently, and the curse that rose, hot and bitter, from his heart died away unuttered. Then he burst into a wicked laugh.

'Let John Thorne lend you another half-sovereign, then, if he's so flush o' money. P'raps he'll keep the whole lot on you if you ask him, and rid me o' the bargain;' and, with a coarse insult that turned his wife's lips white, he took up his hat, and walked to the door.

'Stop!' cried Mrs Harrup, in a firm voice—'stop!' He obeyed in spite of himself.

'Mark Harrup, I've been your wife these ten years. I've worked and toiled for you till I'm old before my time. I've nursed you through many a drunken bout; put up with ill temper and ill words, and, to this day, allus loved you, allus had hope of you; but the words you just spoke have done more to lessen my love, and take away my hope, than all that's passed atween us before. If you don't wish to kill my hopes of you outright, you'll stay at home to-night.'

A mocking look was Mark's reply.

'Husband!' gasped his wife, staring at him in dismay, 'you don't mean—you're not going to the'——

'Yes; I'm goin' where I can find better company!' And then Mark saw his wife sink into a chair, with her face buried in her apron, and heard a great sob as he closed the door upon his Christmas hearth.

CHAPTER III.—IN THE NIGHT.

What length of time had passed since Mark Harrup last beheld his home, would have puzzled him to determine, as he stood, this gloomy afternoon, watching the lamplighter going his round down the street where he lived; nay, how he came to be standing there at all, would have perplexed him to decide. There he was, however, without a penny in his pocket, or a good or hopeful thought in his heart—his last farthing gone in drink, and even his tools—last shame of an honest workman!—pawned to obtain it. Only one place of refuge was open to him in the world—the home he had deserted.

Coming suddenly into the room where his family dwelt, he was greeted by a cry of fear. It proceeded from the lips of Jack and Fanny, on guard, in the twilight, over the baby's cradle. They were the sole occupants of the room.

'Where's your mother?' asked Mark, sitting down by the fireside.

'Out washing, father,' answered Jack meekly.

'When will she be home?' he inquired.

'At six o'clock, for half an hour, to get us tea.'

Mark said no more, but sat watching the few embers in the grate, till the cobbler's clock in the room beneath struck six.

'Here's mother!' cried the children simultaneously, as a well-known step was heard on the stairs; and ere the clock had done striking, 'mother' entered the room.

She started back as she beheld the figure seated by the hearth. For a moment, neither husband nor wife spoke. Mark was the first to break silence.

'Back again, you see. Like a bad half-penny, you can't get rid of me.' He gave a grim laugh.

'I needn't ask you where you've been, Mark Harrup, or why you've come back again,' said his wife in a tone he had never heard before. 'There's that in your face as tells where you've been, and how employed. You don't expect a welcome this time, do you? My face won't lie.'

'I don't expect nothing; you keep quiet, and I'll do the same.' Though Mark spoke fiercely, he turned away his head; he couldn't bear to feel his wife's eyes on him.

'Ay, keep quiet, there's nothing else!' murmured the poor woman bitterly, and, forcing back her tears, she took off her bonnet and shawl, and entered the inner room.

When she appeared again, her tears were dried, and her face looked hard and cold. She went about her work without a word.

As he sat watching her in sulky silence, Mark felt some sharp twinges from time to time. The very forbearance of his wife irritated him. Had she flown into a passion, he could have retaliated, and found an excuse for the angry feelings that were consuming him. But to see her there, calmly getting the children's tea ready, without any other reproach than that her silence conveyed, was more than he could bear.

'Havn't you got nowt to say to me?' he said suddenly, without looking up.

'What should I have to say?' replied his wife in an unmoved voice; 'nothing you'd care to hear.'

'You're amazin' wise; but I'd like to know whether there ain't a scrap o' meat in the house, for one thing. I've eaten nothing this day.'

'There's no meat, but there's bread. We're goin' to have tea, if you'll have some of that.'

Mark had some tea, but both bread and tea had a strange bitter flavour in his mouth.

The meal over, Mrs Harrup put the children to bed, and then prepared to sally forth again to her work.

'I shall be back by nine,' she said, putting on her shawl. 'If you want a light, there's another candle in the closet;' and Mrs Harrup closed the door, and went back to her wash-tub.

Left alone by his own hearth, Mark Harrup felt by no means a cheerful or contented man. His fireside deities had no pleasant words to offer him; his penates had grown voiceless and dumb; or rather, they had changed to furies, that glowered on him with angry faces in the twilight.

Sitting within the charmed circle that surrounds every man's hearth, a terrible despondency crept over him. The alcoholic fire in his veins had burned low, and left him faint, and craving stimulant. The fearful reaction—mental as well as physical—that follows drunkenness had set in—the deadly languor, the suicidal thought.

'I can't bear this,' muttered Mark, erelong; 'I must have something to drink, or I shall go mad.'

But the cupboard was empty; not a drop of beer or spirits could he find. He had no money in his pocket, and no credit at the public-house. He glanced round the room with dull, craving eyes, and at that moment would have sold anything he could lay his hands on to get drink. Suddenly, he gave a start, and sat down. The thought that had just entered his heart took away his breath.

For a moment, Mark Harrup felt his face burn as the dastard thought stood naked before him; the next, he lifted up his head and looked round, half fearful, half defiant.

What was it that moved him thus?

First he opened the door, and peeped out on the staircase; there was no one there. Then he stood and listened for full five minutes to the tap, tap, of the shoemaker's hammer in the room beneath. That done, he went to the window, and drew the ragged curtain across it—for neighbours' eyes are sometimes intrusive—and then, returning to the table, blew out the long-wicked candle.

What a difference it made, the light of that one dip-candle! No sooner was it extinguished, than Mark felt another man. Emboldened by the darkness, he stole softly into the inner room, leaving the door ajar behind him.

Dick and Fanny were sleeping side by side, and the baby reposing in its cradle. Their low, measured breathing was the only sound in the chamber. Not a mouse stirred, not a cricket chirped, not a spider ticked. Guided by the fire-light from the outer room, the man drew near the bed, and looked at his children: they were sleeping tranquilly.

Why did he draw closer the curtains at the bed-foot? Why, moving away, did he give that guilty start as a board creaked under his foot? The deed he was about to do must have no eyes on it, least of all his own children's. Dead as Mark Harrup was to shame, he could not let them witness this last step in their father's downfall.

In another minute he was down on his knees, ransacking his wife's drawers for the few shillings she had earned. One drawer was locked; it was there, probably, her poor earnings were laid by. There was a dress hanging at the bed-foot; Mark felt in the pocket, and drew forth a key. His hand trembled so, he could scarcely place it in the lock. He opened the drawer, turned over the things, and there, wrapped up in a stocking, lay six shillings, the wages of his wife's hard toil. He took them without compunction, closed the drawer, and turned the key. As he did so, a shilling slipped from his fingers and rolled on to the floor. He stooped down to pick it up, and, raising his head again, beheld a pair of bright eyes fixed on him.

There, with his pale face peering between the curtains at the foot of the bed, was Jack awake and watching him.

'Father, you musn't take that. Mother earned it; and it's all we've got.' Though the child was trembling, he spoke bravely.

'What!' cried Mark, in a hoarse, suppressed voice; 'what's that you say?'

'Don't be angry wi' me, father. I saw you do it—I saw you take the money. It's all mother's got; don't take it from us, don't take it.' The little lad clasped his hands, and sprang on to the floor.

'Get out!' cried Mark, as the boy planted himself before him.

'No, father, don't go!—stop, stop! Mother'll break her heart if you take it.'

Jack said no more. Blinded by rage and fear, Mark struck a blow at his first-born that felled him to the ground.

His heart smote him when he saw the lad lie stretched on the floor, with a deathlike face, and a red stain trickling down his night-gown.

'Jack, look up—look up!' cried the trembling man; but the child stirred not.

Mark gave a terror-stricken glance round the chamber. A thousand fears rushed upon his mind. Bewildered, guilty, dreading he knew not what, he rushed from the room, and fled out of the house.

Once out in the lighted streets, he sped along without a pause; but his pace, though swift at first, grew slower by degrees, and at length he came to a stop. In proportion as he had widened the distance between him and his home, his fears had diminished.

'The lad was stunned, nothing more,' muttered Mark, standing at a street-corner to take breath. 'These low-spirited megrims must be put a stop to.'

'Of course they must!' cried a voice close to him; and looking round, Mark beheld, to his horror, his old acquaintance, 'D. T.,' spring from one of the casks on a brewer's dray just turning the corner, and alight on the lamp-post by his side.

'Hollo! out of sorts, Mark?' said the goblin, looking down from his queer eyrie, and shaking his head. 'What's up? Pockets empty, eh?'

'No,' replied Mark, with surly embarrassment, and he began to rattle the money he carried.

'That's a good sound, Mark. Nothing wrong in that quarter. You don't look the thing, though. Let me advise you to get off home, and take a cosy supper with your wife. They'll be glad to see you; and you're only catching rheumatism here. It's amazingly cold to-night.'

Mark caught the wicked twinkle of the eyes that watched him, and swore a great oath.

'That's your manners, is it? Well, I only spoke for the best. Perhaps you'd prefer a glass of something hot in the parlour yonder. It's a good house, and they keep good liquor, I know' (the fiend pointed across the street to the public-house, resplendent in its night-array of blazing lamps). 'Anyhow, take your own choice, and don't lose your temper.'

And so saying, the imp glided down the lamp-post, doubled itself up, shot between Mark's legs, and was gone.

'Yes, and I'll do it too,' said Mark. 'I'll take my own choice; I've the means in my hand.'

He looked at his money in the lamp-light. Those six bright pieces could purchase him a stout heart and immunity from care for many hours to come.

He crossed the street, and entered the public-house parlour; the workmen sitting there stared at him.

His fierce looks and voice, as he called for brandy, were enough to draw attention on him. He took no part in the conversation going on; but sat in dreamy wrath, drinking off glass after glass, and adding fuel to the fierce passions within him; it needed but a word to blow them into flame. It came erelong.

Two men entered the outer room, and stood talking at the counter. Mark, seated near the door, could see all that passed in the bar. The mention of his own name first roused him.

'By the way,' said the taller and better dressed of the men, 'what's become of Harrup? I hear he's out of hospital; but he's never come back again to his work.'

The other, a short man with a good-tempered face, shook his head. 'It's a bad case, I'm afraid—a bad case.'

It was John Thorne and Barrett, the foreman of the works.

'Well, he's been going the wrong road a long time, or I'm mistaken,' continued the first speaker. 'I don't know much about him, for he was a surly sort of chap, and always shy of me, after I was put over him. He's a neighbour of yours, Thorne, ain't he?'

'Ay; and his wife's as industrious a little woman as breathes.'

'I expect his name's taken off the books at our place. He'll never be taken in again now. Has he any bairns?'

'Yes, God help 'em! I hear he's just got home from his last drunken bout; so the neighbours say. He's leading 'em a nice time of it to-night, I'll bet a penny.'

'That's a lie!' roared Mark, and he rushed into the bar, foaming like a madman—'that's a lie, Thorne! Take that for it.'

He dealt a murderous blow that would have sent John Thorne to the floor, had he not ducked his head.

'Stop, my man—stop!' cried Barrett, interposing a strong arm; but it was borne down like a reed as Mark made another furious rush.

'Turn him out! turn him out!' cried the workmen issuing from the parlour, and crowding round.

Mark was a powerful man, and dangerous to deal with at such a time. All his fury was directed against his old companion, and he swore he would take John Thorne's life. Then followed a crash of glass and general tumult. Finding himself penned in, Mark gathered together all his strength, made a rush for it, and burst into the street, just as the police were arriving on the scene.

And now Mark took to his heels in earnest. It was no sham flight this time. A crowd was after him, threatening and denouncing. But he felt new strength in his limbs as he fled. Rather did it seem that he flew than ran, so fast did street follow street, and the scene change. His pursuers were left far behind, weary and panting. Their shouts grew fainter and fainter, and at last died away altogether. There stood Mark in a dark street, safe and unpursued, only dizzy with the rapid transit through the air.

He was far away from the spot where he started, far from his home or usual haunts. He could see by the light of a distant lamp the river flowing black and strong at the bottom of the street. He was in Lambeth; he knew the neighbourhood, for he had worked there as a boy. He set off again with rapid steps, little inclined to awake the past.

The night was dark, starless, and still. Mark thought he had never seen so few people abroad in his life. For the most part, the streets were empty; and when a neighbouring church-clock struck the quarters past eleven, Mark distinctly heard a mournful echo strike back from the dead-wall he was passing. Street after street presented the same deserted appearance. The sky was so inky black that the very light of the gas seemed absorbed by it. There was something inexpressibly disquieting in the unnatural darkness and silence.

What was this strange influence abroad to-night, that all was thus solemn and still? What mystery was this brooding over the city, like the silent hour that precedes an earthquake?

A strange awe fell over Mark; he felt as though some terrible judgment were at hand.

Suddenly, on reaching the next street-corner, he stopped. Hark! what was that sound that made the air tremble? that noise of voices rolling out like a great sea into the night? Mark beheld before him a building streaked with long rows of windows, whence streamed broad floods of light. He recognised the place in a moment. It was a chapel where he had once been with his mother, years and years ago, to a midnight service on New-year's eve. He would have turned back, but his feet were rooted to the ground.

The singing had ceased; but now he could hear the voice of the preacher praying in a strong sonorous voice. He knew the voice again instantly. Impelled by a terrible curiosity, Mark opened the chapel-doors and peeped within.

Yes, as he thought: the same chapel, the same preacher, the same clerk, and—oh, ghastly spectacle!—the self-same congregation that sat there five-and-twenty years ago. There they were, not a day older, going through the service, just as though they had not—most of them—been dead and buried years ago. It turned Mark faint with terror when he beheld his childish self seated by his mother's side, in the very spot where they had sat twenty-five years ago. He closed the baize-doors softly, and, staggering into the porch, sat down on the chapel steps, with his head buried in his hands.

Was it real? or was he about to die, and this the warning he was to receive?

A thousand thoughts hurried through his brain; a crowd of lights danced before his sight, and his burning eyeballs seemed to spit fire as he pressed his hand before them. What was that strange picture travelling before him in the dark? A phantom panorama seemed unrolling itself there!

It was his own life passing before him. His childhood, his mother's grave, his apprentice-days, his young wife—all were there, terrible and significant as is the past of every life. He groaned aloud. The promise of his boyhood, the hopes of his youth, the strength and skill of his manhood, were to end then thus. There stood the irrevocable deeds to witness to his shame. Had he not outraged his wife, his children, and his friend? Had he not that very night thirsted for John Thorne's blood? robbed his own wife, and struck (perhaps slain) his child? Oh, coward heart! there is no hope now. Slink out of the world thou hast rendered blacker by thy presence, for it disowns thee!

He rose, blind and sick, to seek an exit. Just then, there rose an impassioned burst of voices from the chapel within. They were singing out the old year. Hark!

Now let us join with voices blended,
  To chant the year that nears its goal;
Say, sinner, ere the year be ended,
  Say, wilt thou save thy deathless soul?

God's ear is open; hope still lingers;
  Time's sands flow fast—they're nearly run;
See, yonder clock lifts warning fingers:
  Awake! be saved, ere the year be done!

'Ere the year be done!' repeated Mark, a cold sweat breaking out on his forehead. 'Is this, then, the last night o' the year? God Almighty! where am I? What am I about? It's too late—too late. I'm a doomed man.'

The bells broke into a loud peal in a church near at hand, as he spoke; Mark stopped his ears, and fled.

There was nothing left but the river; it flowed yonder at the bottom of the timber-yard in the next street. Mark knew the spot well enough; he had worked there as a lad. The next minute he was groping his way through piles of wood, and the wreck and litter that strewed the margin of the river. There lay the great stream before him, torpid and black, like a boa gorged with the foul offal of the city. On either shore stretched the dusky outlines of wharves and buildings, keeping guard over its foul slumbers. No boat nor barge now woke its rest, but it lay there grim and deadly as Python in its lair, breathing out poison over the slumbering city. Through the murky night, the houses on the Milbank side were scarcely visible, save where a lamp glimmered near the water's edge. Mark gazed on the dark river, and, shuddering, hoped his body would not be discovered there. 'Perhaps the current might bear him away to a better resting-place in the far-off sea. Any way, whether there or here, there would be an end to him and his shame.'

Brooding over these thoughts, he drew nearer the water, when, to his terror, he heard his own name distinctly pronounced out of the darkness hanging over the river. There was something floating up in the distance, dim and shapeless; now the light of the lamp on shore shone on it. Mark's knees knocked together with fear. There, astride on a dead dog, swollen and hideous, sat his old enemy, the branded imp! The creature greeted him with a long shrill laugh; it was prolonged by a series of echoes that stretched far down the river; and, peering through the darkness, Mark beheld a demon troop, headed by three ghastly figures, seated on a crazy raft, sailing up.

'Here they come, Mark; I promised I'd introduce you to my family one day. Look alive, lads; here he is!'

Mark had never, in his worst dreams, seen anything so loathsome, so terrible as the three creatures seated on that raft. Had all the lazar-houses, prisons, and asylums in Europe been searched through, they could not have produced three specimens of humanity so hideous and libellous as were these.

'Here they are, my three worthy brothers, Paralysis, Apoplexy, and Madness—eccentric, perhaps, but moving in the best circles, and cultivated by all classes of society! As you have already made the acquaintance of the youngest member of the family, your humble servant, *Delirium Tremens*'—here the goblin bowed, and smiled horribly—'I hand you over to any one of these gentlemen who may wish to succeed me. Ah, ah, ah! Sold, sold!'

The demon burst into a laugh that startled all the echoes round, and opening his black bottle, poured out a libation to the river. The effect was instantaneous. The water began to boil and seethe in an extraordinary manner; bubbles rose up on the surface all around, and, bursting, disclosed phantom shapes and figures on all sides—some foul and unnatural; others human-eyed, and full of fearful meanings; pale, gin-blighted infants; bruised and tangle-haired women; brutal, scowling-faced men: monstrous shapes born of sin, that swam and dived, and came into sight, and floated away again into the night.

'Behold our subjects—behold the offspring of our great parent. Yonder they are, and here's the sceptre with which we rule them.' With mock dignity, the fiend brandished his bottle aloft, and pointed to the river.

'At last I know thee, cursed fiend!' cried Mark. ''Tis thou who thus transformest God's creatures. 'Tis thou who hast dragged me down to death. Perish, foul spectre!' and, as he spoke, he seized a spar, and, springing forward, aimed a blow at the face that mocked him. But it only cleaved the air—the fiend was gone—and, losing his balance, the wretched man fell back into the shallow water at the river's edge, to die drowned in a foot of water.

He felt the foul stream bubbling over his lips, and could not rise. He tried to cry for help, but his voice died in his throat. A noise like that of bells from a hundred steeples sounded in his ears, and the air grew thick with the troops of spectres rising from the river. The lingering death before him roused him to new strength, and, finding voice at last, Mark Harrup gave a great cry, stretched out his arms, and grasped—a warm, living hand!

'Hollo! that's a precious sort o' noise to make. Wake up—wake up! you're dreaming, man!'

It was his neighbour, the cabman, in the next bed, who thus adjured him. Mark opened his eyes, and, behold! there he lay in the ward of St Shambles, with the morning sun shining in at the windows, the world —the real flesh-and-blood world—around him, and Life still his to better and improve.

It was all a dream, then! Yes, a dream; but, judged by its results, more real, more potent than many of the so-called realities of life; and so Mark Harrup lived to acknowledge it. His first act—after asking permission to shake hands with Number Twenty—was to breathe up a few words more like a prayer than any that escaped his lips for many a year; and that prayer was heard.

A SEBASTOPOL GUIDE-BOOK.

One of the caricatures that appeared at St Petersburg, during the Crimean war, represents a gentleman accompanied by an elephantine bull-dog. 'Why do you call your dog Sebastopol?' asks a friend. 'Try to take him, and you'll soon find out,' is the reply. Our own riddle, likening Gibraltar to ineligible lodgings, may fairly turn up its nose at the discomfited Slavonian. The bull-dog has been taken; but he bit hard before he yielded, and his master had no reason to complain of his conduct.

The Russians are justly proud of the defence of Sebastopol. Within the walls, as well as without, a heroic struggle was maintained throughout that terrible war-storm; and we, who gloriously gained the prize, can well afford to admire the courage of those who not ingloriously lost it.

Sebastopol will long be a household word among the children of the czar; familiar to the fur-clad tribes who dwell along the shores of the Arctic Sea, to the exile and the hunter in the wastes of Siberia, and to the mariners whose vessels traverse the waters of the Euxine. The fierce riders of the Ukraine will talk of it at the bivouac; it will form the subject of stories in the coffee-shops of Astrakhan; the tale of its defence will speed the weary hours spent at outposts in the Caucasus; and at a thousand Russian firesides, one of that leaguered garrison will be found, for years to come, to narrate his adventures and sufferings there in the cause of 'God, the fatherland, and the czar.'

Many a pilgrim, too, will visit the spot consecrated to him by the blood of his countrymen; and for such travellers the guide-book is intended from which we are about to quote. It is written in Russian, by one D. Afanasev, an author of whom we know nothing except that he is intensely patriotic, and very fond of fine phrases.

The book was compiled soon after the termination of the war, and the traveller is warned not to expect much comfort in the city. If he is resolved to stay there, he is recommended to patronise Vettsel's Sebastopol Hotel, in the Morskaya Street. 'The charges are—about six francs a day for a room with a bed, &c.; for tea in the morning or evening, eighteenpence; for meat, about a franc the portion; for a cup of coffee, fourpence.'

The traveller having arrived at the city, his guide takes him round the fortifications, and points out the most interesting spots. One of these is the Ekaterinsky Quay. 'This quay, before the siege began, was the favourite resort of the inhabitants of Sebastopol during their evening promenade. On one of its squares was the orchestra of the military band. Pleasant sounds used to be wafted far across the harbour, which was filled with vessels of war. The whole of the quay and the steps were covered with crowds of fashionably dressed ladies and of sailors; on every side were heard the hum of conversation and the sounds of merry laughter; gay boats darted to and fro. Add to this picture the starlight of the bewitching southern night, the blaze of a thousand varicoloured lights, with their reflection on the water, whose surface, broken by the splashing oars, burned with a phosphoric glow.

'During the defence of the city, this quay was used as the chief dépôt for the supplies of the fortifications. On the 26th of August, at 10 o'clock P.M.,* two sloops, containing a great quantity of powder, were blown up by the enemy's rockets. In the dark night there was a blinding flash, a fearful shock. The picture was magnificent. The whole quay was defaced; a number of heavy guns collected there were shattered to pieces, and thirty-two men were killed.'

The author proceeds to relate how a certain officer, 'a man of great height, and tolerably stout,' was flung some distance, and how 'the skirts of his military cloak were torn away and vanished in boundless space!'—a most thrilling conclusion.

The visitor proceeds. He is taken to the market-place. 'Here in past time were held the markets and the amusements of the people on holidays. The spot was always swarming with lively crowds, and every inhabitant of the city, to whatsoever class of society he belonged, found there diversion and pleasure. On the first days of the siege, the 12th and 13th of September, the place became the camp of the defenders of the city. Drums were beating, and groups of brave sailors, tried in the affair of Sinope, were stretched on the ground in all directions. Brave men! From the time of his first step on deck, the service introduces the seaman to danger, and makes him familiar with it, for he passes his life amid the roaring of the gale and the thunder of the foaming sea. Gaze on that face, listen to that voice—their course is that of honour, glory is their due. Peace to your dust, ye examples of heroism in the Russian nation! They all are there—they all fell a noble offering to honour, for the glory of the Russian name, performing a noble deed in behalf of their native land.'

Here is an account of a Sailors' Battery. 'On the 5th of October, at the moment when the fire was hottest, a grayhaired monk, bareheaded, holding in his hand a cross, proceeded round the advanced lines of batteries with tranquil steps, and blessed the troops in artless speech. "Children," he said, "remember God; he who believes shall not die, and it is a holy thing to serve the czar." Finally, he passed through an embrasure to the parapet, and falling on his knees amidst a storm of missiles, prayed for the victims of that day, and for a cessation of the horrors of war.

'Only an eye-witness could thoroughly appreciate this simple but wonderfully sweet and consoling manifestation of true faith, so much above what we can attain to; in a moment of strong emotion, such scenes make a deep impression on a man's moral nature. The sailors crossed themselves devoutly, and, loading the cannon, replied: "Father, we will remember God, and will unite in serving the czar as we ought;" and well did they keep their word. The day of the 5th of October will be a memorable one in the annals of the glorious defence; the troops did not retire from their guns till late in the evening; and notwithstanding the tremendous fatigue, they were very unwilling to surrender their places to those who were sent to relieve them.'

The author appears to be a sailor himself, for he dwells long on the naval glories of other days.

'Look on the deserted, lifeless harbour, where only the fragments of masts, peering above the wave, recall to mind that which has vanished—the Black Sea fleet, which once so proudly vaunted itself in this roadstead. The pennants of one hundred and fifty vessels of war used to salute Sebastopol, and the constant movement in the harbour, the interminable going and coming of boats, gave a special life to the city, and a charming picture to its inhabitants. Let us look back upon the past. Here is the experimental squadron returning from practice; the ships fly towards the entrance, crowding all sail: troops of spectators, armed with opera-glasses and telescopes, fill the Little Boulevard, and follow each movement of the squadron, which executes dashing manœuvres at the signal of the flag-ship. The crowd grows animated, and expresses its raptures or disapproval aloud; even the ladies join in the disputes of the sailors, and cast criticising glances on the movements of the ships. When the fleet enters the harbour, it is aware of this. The sailors seeing the people, know that their movements are followed by rigid critics, and accordingly exert their utmost skill, each crew hoping to hear flattering praises of its ship on arriving at the quay. Now the squadron is in the harbour; the anchors fall; the chain-cables rattle out; another moment, and the sails are furled, the yards squared, the tackle covered up, and the ships gracefully admire themselves in the liquid mirror of the calm roadstead. Another moment, and gay boats are darting over the harbour to the quay, where the crowds from the boulevards await their coming; new scenes of general satisfaction manifest themselves, and the happiness of reunited families banishes all coldness even from the face of a foreign observer, who does not participate in the joyful greetings. You have seen one picture; let me shew you another also. It is the 21st of November 1854, and the news of the return of the victorious squadron from Sinope has run along the electric wire around the city, and aroused all its inhabitants. It is a warm, clear morning, and old and young, men and women, swarm in dense crowds along the boulevards and the sea-shore. In the harbour is every vessel of the Black Sea fleet which has not shared in the famous fight; in the estuary is a squadron of injured ships, with crippled masts and broken bulwarks all towed by steamers.

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* It is to be observed that our author everywhere uses *old style* in the statement of dates.

'A welcoming salute peals from the No. 8 Battery, and after it thunder the greetings of every ship in the bay. The salute is answered by the guns of the men-of-war as they enter the harbour—guns which so short a time back were gloriously destroying the hostile fleet. The ceaseless cheers of some thousands of enraptured spectators are borne across the harbour from the city side, and find an echo on the opposite shore.

'At that moment, Sebastopol was full of confidence, proud of the fleet, and joyous as a youth proceeding to the battle-field. Time passed, and the city took up her position for the defence of her native land, and events whirled quickly before her. On the 10th of September 1854 the harbour was filled with vessels of war; the enemy's fleet was in view, but far out at sea. The incessant bustle and the swift movements of the boats in all directions testified to the activity of the sailors; and their efforts were effectual. After the unsuccessful battle of the Alma, the troops that had defended Sebastopol were withdrawn by flank-movements to Baktchéserai, and the town and fleet were left for the time to the heroism of the sailors, with very insufficient means of resistance. Our admirals did not take long to consider. "Let us die, but with honour!" was the cry. The vessels were towed to the mouth of the harbour, and sunk between Fort Constantine and Fort Alexander. Sad were the sailor's feelings, melancholy was the scene to him—to watch the gradual sinking of the ship he had helped to work, on which he had lavished his cares, as on the woman he loved.'

Here is a description of the naval bombardment of the city:

'On the 5th of October, at 1 o'clock P.M., the hostile fleet, consisting of fifteen vessels of the line, besides frigates, took up their position in the bay at 500 fathoms from the entrance, and began to batter the city and the forts. Clouds of dense smoke concealed the ships from the besieged; but the flashing of long lines of fire, the thundering roar of broadsides, and the surface of the harbour lashed into foam by the shot, bore witness for a space of six hours to the close vicinity of the foe. The roar of 3000 guns united in one terrible peal, and was heard at Simferopol.

'An eventful day, which has crowned the defenders of Sebastopol with a wreath of glory. The hostile batteries ceased their fire, the injured fleet withdrew, and the joy of all in the city banished the doubts that had arisen.'

The English are not often mentioned in the book. The author declares that he could always recognise the spots where they had encamped by the enormous number of empty bottles they left behind them; and he speaks in one place of their excessive regret at not being able to throw their shot as far as the open space where the soldiers of the garrison were diverting themselves with games, and solacing their minds with music. Here is also a curious incident:

'Balaklava, in this war, will have immortalised itself in the eyes of posterity. At the time when 15,000 of the English troops were marching in triumphal array on the defenceless little town, suddenly a shot came whizzing from the hill, and then another, and finally a volley of cannon. The English were confounded, beat a retreat, brought up their artillery, and began to batter the unhappy town. After a long bombardment, they at last perceived that their fire was totally unanswered. It appeared that eighty men, veterans of the Greek battalion of Balaklava, had amused themselves on the hill by firing some of the small stores of ammunition they possessed out of two ten-pounder brass guns. While surrendering themselves prisoners, they saved their ancient colours, giving them to one of their women, who kept them hidden in a cushion.'

We will revenge ourselves on the author for this very probable story by making him relate the evacuation of Sebastopol:

'On the dark night of the 27th of August, the whole of the Ekaterinsky Quay was crowded with the retreating troops. More than 3000 wounded men, who had scarcely been able to drag themselves to the spot, or who had been carried by their comrades from the bastions, harrowed the feelings of all who were present by the deep groans that told of the pain they endured. Along the quay lay steamers, barges, and boats. In sullen silence, without a word, the troops embarked, taking the wounded with them, and crossed to the other side. Only the clash of arms, the groans of the wounded, the challenge of the sentries, and the roll-call of regiments and companies, testified to the life of this deathlike picture, over which was cast a lurid light by the distant sky, which reflected the burning of the opposite part of the city. By eight o'clock in the morning ended the transport of the last troops which covered the retreat. On the north side all was movement. A cool observer on this day, so sad to Sebastopolitans, might have enjoyed the beautiful picture of the immense camp on the further side of the roadstead, and the uninterrupted march of the troops. The enemy, either expecting that an unsuccessful attack would be accompanied by an enormous loss, or respecting the sublime courage of their heroic foe, did not venture to disturb them during their abandonment of the city. . . . . The defenders of Sebastopol, whose courage had been tempered in the deadly fire, who had for a whole year encountered their enemies face to face, and who had guarded with their breasts each step of their native land, were worthy of a brighter day.'

The following anecdote must vex any Zouave who interested himself in the church of St Michael: 'On the abandonment of the city, the priest of this church buried in the ground within the building, in one corner, an enormous quantity of church-plate, and some of his own valuables in another. Strange to relate, though the French soldiers, in their search for treasure, dug up all the ground in the vaults, and discovered the property of the priest, yet the church-plate was found by us intact on our return.'

We may take leave of our guide after hearing two anecdotes—one of a great man whose name we know a little, and the other of a by no means great man, whose name we know intimately. 'Facing St Michael's Church, are the remains of a blue house. Here were the quarters of General Todtleben. Here were to be seen the plans, whence, without ceasing, new bastions sprang up to fire on the obstinate foe. Here, when the hero's foot had been pierced by a ball, and the first bandage was being applied, a shell burst close to the window—the surgeon in his fright gave an involuntary start, and tore the wound open. The general, however, maintained his usual equanimity, and even cut a joke upon the doctor's awkwardness.'

Next for the familiar name. The story will edify the French ambassador. 'But see the Malakoff mound. The history of its name is very simple: a sort of pothouse used to stand there, and, at the same time, there served in the admiralty a certain man called the Skipper Malakoff, an active fellow, but given to drink. He was the proprietor of the pothouse, and all who wanted to see him sought him there. He lived there many years, and at last the place and the man became known by the same name, which has accordingly been handed down to posterity as the designation of the mound.'

THE UNKNOWN BASS.

A STORY FROM BEGINNING TO END.

In a by-street in Marylebone, and not very far from the theatre, a certain small house had been to let for many months. 'To Let Furnished,' said the card in the window; but there was certainly not much within doors to bear out that complimentary participle. A good deal of horse-hair, and a short allowance of looking-glass, made up the main features of the sitting-rooms; while some very hard mattresses, scudding under bare poles, with thin slices of drugget, by way of carpets, characterised the sleeping-apartments.

It was not the sort of house for any man—but a Petruchio—to bring his wife to spend the honeymoon in; and yet scarce anything but a honeymoon would have made the residence tolerable. When the card, therefore, which within its parlour-window had braved for so long a time the cobwebs and the flies, was withdrawn, when the stubborn flag was struck which proclaimed that the little house was taken, the astonishment of such of the neighbours as knew the place was very considerable. The inhabitants of such parts of the metropolis as the vicinity of the Marylebone Theatre are by no means so uninquisitive as Londoners have the reputation of being; they rather take a pride in cutting off their peculiar district from the rest of the world, and making it a sort of provincial town of their own, with as fine a circulation of scandal and cock-and-bull stories as can be promoted. It is not to be supposed, then, that the new tenant of No. 99 had escaped inquisition, even if his appearance and mode of life had been much less mysterious than they were. These were indeed calculated to upset the stoicism of a North American Indian. In the first place, this gentleman who cared so little for good furniture, only exposed the moiety of his face to the Marylebone eye; the other half being covered with a voluminous and patriarchal snow-white beard. While in the second place, meagre as this exhibition was, it was scarcely ever afforded; for the tenant of No. 99 'kept himself *to* himself'—to use the neighbours' phrase—to a most aggravating extent, and such as led, naturally enough, to the supposition he must have committed at least a felony.

'No one,' it was argued, 'as hadn't done something which he had a good right to be ashamed of, would remain in doors all day, and only come out o' nights, with the owls and bats, for victuals.' 'Nobody as had a proper respect for himself, would keep all his blinds down, sitting-room and bedroom, Sundays and worky-days, as though there were a corpse in the house—as perhaps, indeed, there was.' 'Nobody would take such pains to put his candle between himself and other folk's eyes, when he sat in his parlour after dark, unless for some good reason—just as if people as lived opposite hadn't something else to do beside spying into their neighbours'—which, however, if they had, it is certain they neglected it for that inquisitorial proceeding, and in vain.

It took a bold woman—and women are far bolder than men in such matters—to resort to more direct measures with this formidable Unknown; but when the local excitement got beyond bounds, it found a voluntary channel in Mrs Damahoy, who purveyed groceries to the subject of all this conjecture, as well as pork, dried herrings, and indeed almost every luxury of life except shaving-soap, which he didn't use. As she was enclosing in brown paper, with a greater elaborateness than usual, the articles required by her formidable customer, one Saturday night, she ventured, without, however, daring to look up at him, to ask whether he didn't feel it rather lonesome shut up in that No. 99 all alone. Receiving no reply to this kind inquiry, and imagining, therefore, at least that she had not angered him, she made bold to repeat it, and to give him a benignant glance at the same time. So far from this being reciprocated, never did a gentleman's face on a white beard look so like the Saracen's Head upon Snow Hill before; the unknown's hair began to bristle, and his eyes to glow, while his mouth, looking with its long appendage for all the world like a Highlander's sporran, closed with a ferocious snap, as he said: 'No, ma'am.' Such was the terror with which Mrs Damahoy inspired her hearers on the telling of this adventure, that there was none in Marylebone who durst interrogate the bearded man again. Opinions, original and selected, concerning himself and his occupations were, however, not the less rife; among the more ingenious of which we may mention—1st, That he was a cunning worker in silver and brass, or, less delicately, a successful forger of the basest currency; 2d, That he was the individual so long pictorially familiar to the British public as the living example of the benefits conferred by the Balm of Mesopotamia upon the human hair; and 3d, That he was a refugee, imbued with the most practical political principles, engaged upon constructing a new Infernal Machine. In the midst of all this mysterious conjecture, it became suddenly and simultaneously known, as though by telegraphic dispatch in the *Times* newspaper, that the tenant of No. 99 had joined a convivial club, had become one of the members of the West Marylebone Sons of Song. The revulsion of popular feeling in consequence of this information was indescribable. If Mr Greenacre—at that particular time in close custody for his injudicious behaviour to his consort—had been invited to Buckingham Palace, and given his pick among the maids of honour for his second; if Caspar Hauser—not known to be deceased by the Marylebonians—had been enticed from Germany by the offer of the editorship of the *Court Journal;* if Mr Thomas Cribb of the P. R. had got the refusal of the vacant Archbishopric of Canterbury—the news of none of these things could have affected Mrs Damahoy and her large circle of acquaintance with greater surprise.

Every woman who had a husband belonging to the W. M. S. S. no longer looked upon his 'clubbism' as a dissipation or an excess, but much as a very conscientious person regards a raffle, in which he has been so fortunate as to secure a prize. Each man was enjoined to bring home the most exact particulars of how the unknown conducted himself in voice and gesture; while the more anxious helpmates suggested that his every pocket should be searched before admission, lest the wretch might take a fancy to make experiment on that 'vile body,' the Sons of Song, of the Infernal Machine intended for the Fathers of Tyranny.

It was as one of the members of the W. M. S. S. that I myself first became acquainted with our hero. He was certainly a very striking-looking person indeed; and if he had but been blind, might have sat for Belisarius. It was not unusual for some really excellent singers to mix with our company—people with vocal organs, the public reputation of which would have been tarnished were they known to have been exercised at our humble club, and therefore we had a rule that nobody need give his name upon joining us. All that we required of a man was, that he should be able to sing a song, or, at all events, take part in a glee, and that our new member could do to great perfection. He was the bassest of the bass, and could sink to lower depths in the scale of harmony than any of us.

His voice, like that of the ghost of Hamlet's father, seemed to be kept underground, where it acquired certain rich rumbling notes unapproachable by the general lungs. His jealousy on this matter was extreme, and he was peculiarly sardonic upon Simmons (of the Cider Cellars), his sometime rival, whom he likened to the smaller animal in the fable of the frog and the ox. These two, like a couple of hostile corps of sappers and miners, went on endeavouring to get each underneath the other, until something snapped at the bottom of Simmons's throat, which put him, as was unfeelingly but facetiously observed, quite 'hoarse de combat.'

Our bearded friend always reminded me of the Italian singer in the story, who died of vexation because a stranger, who wanted his post, had inquired if he were the Pope's Bass in deeper tones than he himself could compass. He certainly would not have remained in the W. M. S. S. except as *facile princeps*, cock of the walk. Beside his gifts of harmony, however, the stranger was soon found to be a man of great social endowments. As soon as the business of the evening was concluded, his voice came up to ordinary conversation-pitch, and kept the supper-table in a roar with his brilliant witticisms. The singularity of his conduct, as one who had voluntarily become a member of a convivial club, was this, that the instant after he had wished us 'good-night,' and crossed the threshold, he ceased to utter a word. He shook off any one who attempted to accompany him home, and stalked gloomily away to his No. 99, not again to reappear in social life until the next meeting of the W. M. S. S., on that day fortnight. The invitations of his fellow-members to visit their houses he rejected almost rudely; and, therefore, it is needless to say the wives never got to think any better of the mysterious and bearded unknown than at first. Nevertheless, the neighbourhood began to get used to him, as neighbourhoods will in time get used to anybody, and Mrs Damahoy soon found herself dispensing to her once awful customer the same short weight in his bacon, the same alien substances in his sugar, as she gave to the oldest and most trusting inhabitant of the district. I dare say that when New Year's eve came round, the postman would have called for his Christmas-box just as naturally at No. 99 as at any other door, although he had never left a letter there; and that the Blanket Committee would have applied for a donation, albeit there was known to be such a very scanty allowance for night-covering in the bedrooms of No. 99 itself. These extremities of human hardihood were not, however, by the bearded man to be experienced, on account of a certain astounding circumstance to which all that has been above described is but the introduction.

It was on a certain evening in the beginning of April that the club looked upon its best bass-singer for the last time. Simmons was thence all the more malicious against his rival because of his cracked voice, and there was a large general attendance. After supper, conversation taking, naturally enough, a musical direction, we began to discuss the merits of the then new arrival at Covent Garden, the great Russian bass-singer, Downinistoeski. He had not sung yet, but was to give the first specimen of his magnificent art of sinking that very night.

'Nobody will ever care to listen to an English singer again,' squeaked the ex-bass Simmons.

'Pooh!' bellowed our bearded friend contemptuously, but in tones so like that of a trombone in bad spirits that we could not help laughing. Simmons in particular laughed like a penny-trumpet. Belisarius, as we called him playfully, never retorted one word, but arose presently and put on his great-coat. It was not yet ten o'clock, and yet he was evidently going, and going in a very bad temper. Several of us begged him to sit down again, and be appeased, but his *amour propre*—his favourite organ—had been offended: his hirsute chin assumed the aspect of the fretful porcupine, and he answered 'No,' in the accents of distant thunder.

'He has gone to hear the Russian singer,' squeaked the unforgiving Simmons; and after a few minutes, his absence was no more remarked. Whether he did go to hear the Russian singer or not, no mortal tongue can tell. Certain it is that in the next morning's paper, immediately after a glowing eulogium upon the unrivalled powers of the new artiste at Covent Garden, there appeared this paragraph: 'We stop the press to publish the awful fate which has befallen the subject of the foregoing eulogium. Herr Downinistoeski was assassinated last night upon his way home from the opera. No cause for the fiendish act has been even suggested, and the dark deed and its author remain at present shrouded in the obscurest mystery.' As soon as I had read this statement, I instinctively put on my hat, and turned my steps to No. 99. A considerable crowd, consisting of half the club, was in front of the house already, to all of whom the same terrible idea had simultaneously occurred. The first expression was given to it by a certain cracked voice inquiring for a policeman, and demanding that the door should be broken open. This last was immediately effected, and the whole of the exceedingly ill-furnished little house searched from top to bottom in a few minutes; but the bearded tenant of No. 99 had disappeared for ever.

Years rolled on without revealing anything of the mysterious murderer, or of the man whom the Sons of Song, with one accord, choose to identify with him; I say 'choose,' because the matter still remains entirely optional. Were I a writer of mere fiction, it would, of course, be easy enough, by some plausible explanation, to satisfy the reader's curiosity; but simple Truth, with severe finger at her lip, bids me be silent. Never save once have we even appeared to be getting to the bottom of this awful mystery, although we have been heaving the lead of Supposition in the fathomless waters of Possibility from then till now. That *once* occurred this time ten years—that is to say, on April 1, 1849, the anniversary of the supposed murderer's disappearance. Upon that evening the club was always somewhat sombre (for it never quite shook off the memory of the bearded stranger), and on this occasion it was particularly so by reason of the cholera, then raging in that part of Marylebone with exceeding fury. We had finished our glees, which had been of a weirdlike and uncheerful character, and were sitting, thirteen in number, each with his pipe of tobacco, in a moody silence, which had scarce been broken during the quarter of an hour that the pot-boy had been gone for beer. It was an unconscionable time for him to be absent upon such an errand; but we had hardly observed it, for the thoughts of most of us were, I think, more seriously engaged. All of a sudden, in rushed the boy with the foaming pewters, which he set down, without a word, on the nearest table, and pressed his hand against his side. His hair was in wild disorder, his cheeks were blanched as though by abject fear.

'You have seen him,' squeaked the ex-bass Simmons, with the quaver of unaffected terror—'you have seen him! Tell us, tell us!'

The whole thirteen rose up, and removing their long 'churchwardens' from their mouths, as by a common impulse, echoed the question after the manner of an operatic chorus, 'You have seen him! Tell us, tell us!'

'Seen him?' returned the pot-boy vacantly—'seen *who?* I ain't seen no person; but I bin heating a 'eap of happles at tuppence the pound, and now I'm very sorry for it.'

N.B.—'The right of believing the above story is reserved for the reader.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MR FARADAY's lecture on Ozone, at the Royal Institution, has revived a discussion among chemists as to the real nature of that remarkable element. Some are of opinion that ozone is not a distinct thing, but simply a condition of oxygen at the moment of chemical change, as pointed out some years ago by Professor Brodie.—Dr Tyndall has contributed further facts and experiments in elucidation of the physical phenomena of glaciers, derived from his adventurous explorations in the Alps, in the course of last summer; throwing a beam of light upon a screen, passing on its way through a slab of ice fixed in a press, he shews that by the application of pressure the striæ and veins are produced, on a small scale, which nature produces on a great scale in the glaciers of Mont Blanc. The Sardinian government is to be applied to on the part of the British Association, with a request that measures may be taken to insure the safety of scientific men when pursuing investigations on the summits of the Alps. One of the old guides, Balmat, is to be rewarded for the services he has rendered to savans, by a testimonial of twenty-five guineas' value, voted to him by the Council of the Royal Society.

That the right man got the honour when knighthood was conferred on Mr Armstrong, is everywhere acknowledged; and that he is the right man for the post of engineer to the War Department for Rifled Ordnance, is as unanimously agreed. We hear that this appointment is but a prelude to others which will place competent civilians, and not mere military men, at the head of the great manufacturing departments of the government. Economy should result from this praiseworthy change, for a civilian who has conducted a manufacturing establishment is more likely to understand it than a mere colonel. Erelong, Sir William Armstrong will be delivering cannon from his works at Elswick, on the banks of the Tyne, which are to change the system and art of war, and realise results which, to some minds, are impossibilities. — Meanwhile, Mr Warry, armourer-sergeant at Chatham, is demonstrating that ten rounds a minute can be fired from a brass gun which is but sixteen inches long, weighs not more than eleven pounds, and has the further merit of keeping cool.—The Institution of Civil Engineers have had a long and animated discussion on the ether-engine—that is, a steam-engine combining ether as a motive-power; and their conclusion appears to be that it effects a saving of 30 per cent. in coal. But there is an objection in the fact that ether evaporates, without doing duty, in hot climates; as was ascertained in the experimental trip to the Mediterranean which we noticed last year. The same saving is effected by the use of super-heated steam, as we mentioned last *Month;* and we call attention to the discussion that it may be known how earnestly practical men are seeking for economy and improvements in motive-power.—On one of the northern railways, experiments have been made which prove that coal-burning locomotives may also be smoke-consuming: should the required apparatus come into general use, the travelling public will be saved from a nuisance, and coke-burners must betake themselves to another line of industry.—What is to become of the farriers, now that a machine has been invented which turns out horse-shoes at the rate of sixty a minute! and what will photographers and metallurgists say to M. Tiffereau, who declares that when in South America he converted silver into gold with no other aid than the rays of the sun?

Paper manufacturers are not yet to be left to follow their own devices, and make fortunes in their own way, if we may trust the prime-minister's reply to the deputation that prayed him to do for paper-makers that which had been done for glass-workers. And the Board of Inland Revenue—Excise, as vulgar people call it—refuse permission to an enterprising firm to introduce a new material, cheap and unlimited in supply, for the making of paper.

The delivery of the Hunterian orations—one at the College of Surgeons, the other at the Hunterian Society in the city, is a sign—besides the opening of parliament—that we are close upon the spring quarter. Seeing that the College oration always praises John Hunter, it has been suggested that the time has perhaps come for saying something on the other side of the question. Mr Smee chose for his subject, in the city, the causes and cure of bodily debility, and shewed how, by a knowledge of chemistry, the medical practitioner may treat diseases with success which otherwise would baffle his skill. He described a simple kind of hygrometer made of ametastine—that is, blotting-paper dipped in sulphuric acid, whereby it acquires the property of expanding in moist air, and contracting in dry. 'By taking advantage of this property,' says Mr Smee, 'I have constructed many forms of hygrometers, the most simple of which I shall endeavour to bring into general use, and if I am not greatly mistaken, it will be hereafter the concomitant of the thermometer in every home, and prevent many a traveller from catching a severe rheumatism in a damp bed.'

The discovery of vegetable parchment, which, as most readers know, is paper dipped in sulphuric acid, seems likely to lead to further useful results. We have mentioned one above; another is that, by dipping in sulphuric acid, gutta percha is rendered capable of resisting high temperatures. This is an important fact, to be turned to account by manufacturers and chemists. The purer the gutta percha, the shorter must be the time of the immersion. The effect here noticed is no doubt similar to that produced on asphalt by an intermixture of sulphur: it becomes harder and less fusible than before.

Dr Edward Smith, whose inquiries into the phenomena of respiration we noticed last year, has laid further results before the Royal Society, chiefly concerning the action of food upon the breathing. He has tried fluids of various kinds, from milk and tea to alcohol, and different kinds of solids, and noted the difference thereby produced in the exhalation of carbonic acid from the lungs. The investigations are highly important in a physiological point of view, but as yet the data are too few to establish a satisfactory theory. As regards tea, he finds that it occasions an extraordinary amount of exhalation of carbonic acid from the lungs; a result which, so far, is contrary to former experience.—Mr Arnott has published certain particulars, shewing that, although the use of chloroform saves the patients from pain in amputations, it does not necessarily save them from death afterwards. Of 590 amputations performed in four metropolitan and fourteen provincial hospitals before the introduction of chloroform, the deaths were 20 per cent.; while of 389 amputations since the employment of chloroform, they amount to 30 per cent. He considers that more care should be taken in promoting insensibility; that the doses should be administered in smaller quantities and in a way that does not hide the patient's face, or conceal the signs of death.—Professor Kussmaul has tried some curious experiments on what he calls the necrotisation of limbs, by injection of chloroform. A very small quantity injected into an artery produces intense rigidity of the muscles; strongest where the muscular contractility is most perfect. The muscle is found to lose much of its extensile power, and its electric property, as well as to break easily. In the case of a dead body, the chloroform acts as a powerful antiseptic, and a corpse may be kept for months; but, in a living body, the injected limb dies and putrefies. It is found, moreover, that gangrene may be produced by injection of chloroform; and in these various facts there are new lines of inquiry opened to physiologists.—Instances sometimes occur of snuff-takers suffering from a form of poisoning in the nostril: M. Luitner traces them to the lead or tin in which the snuff has been kept, and shews that it exerts a marked action on those metals.

The spread of that new malady—diphtheria—adds further importance, if possible, to the mysterious question as to the origin of diseases generally. How much there is unknown in that deeply interesting subject! The cause of the potato-disease has not yet been ascertained, nor of the symptoms of weakness observable in the turnip, rendering the growth of that plant more difficult than in times past, nor of the fatal cattle murrain, nor of the silkworm disease. According to M. Lebert, the latter is accompanied by a growth of microscopic mushrooms in all the tissues of the body; and while the blood of healthy silk-worms is acid, that of unhealthy ones is alkaline. He represents the cause of the disease to be overcrowding and want of cleanliness. Feeding the worms on sugared leaves is said to be a remedy; they not only regain their health, but spin better silk, and in greater quantity than before.—In leaving this topic, we may mention a test by which knowing traders at Manchester distinguish silk from cotton in cases of doubt: they dip the specimens into an 'ammoniacal solution of oxide of nickel,' which dissolves silk, but does not dissolve cotton.

Dr Haughton, who read a paper on the Oriental Bath before the British Association, at their Dublin meeting, has followed up the subject with a paper on Hot-air Baths, in which he shews that a bath of hot air is oftentimes more beneficial than water; and that from the remains which may still be seen, there is 'abundant evidence that hundreds of years ago this kind of bath was in full operation in this very climate.' In certain parts of Ireland—Rathlin, and on the borders of Fermanagh—there are 'sweating-houses,' in shape something like a Hottentot hut, to which the peasantry resort, and rid themselves of painful diseases by copious perspiration. Keep the skin in a proper condition by the use of hot-air baths, says the doctor, and it will not only throw off what is impure from within, but will absorb oxygen from without; gout, rheumatism, and diarrhœa will be mitigated in their effects. 'I do not advocate a panacea,' he pursues, 'but I recommend an institution which will *prevent*, as well as cure, disease; which comes down to us from the most remote ages, and is now used by a large proportion of the human race; which is venerable from its antiquity, founded upon science, supported by authority, and confirmed by experience.'

Main-drainage and sewage are now all-important questions with our Metropolitan Board of Works, while from all parts of the country the word is—manures and tillage. The two questions are much more intimately related than is, even yet, commonly believed. Among the subjects for which prizes are offered by the Royal Agricultural Society we find, On tillage as a substitute for manure; On cultivation by steam; and On the causes of the increasing difficulty in turnip-growing. As we have more than once explained in the *Journal*, clay-soils may be made to produce wheat-crops year after year without manure, if dug and stirred often enough to receive the full benefit from light and air. Professor Voelcker shews that liquid manures do little or no good on clay-soils, but are just the thing for sandy soils, as is proved by the abounding fertility of parts of Belgium and Holland, where the light lands are treated with liquid manure. Hence we see that what shall be done with the sewage, is an important question in town-drainage. To discharge the refuse into the river is a disgraceful waste, especially in the present state of our knowledge and experience; and yet we are told by some economists that town-sewage cannot be profitably employed. We hope that in the construction of the costly drainage-works required for London, it will be shewn that an annual profit may be derived from the fertilising substances, sufficient in time to repay the enormous outlay. Mr Glassford, in his pamphlet on the subject, contends that the liquid and solid excretions of the population should never enter the sewers at all, but be distributed into receivers, conveyed thence by mechanical means, and manufactured into slabs for sale. He shews that this may be accomplished by a 'filter-system,' which 'admits of no communication whatever with the atmosphere at any stage of the operation, until the deposit is withdrawn from it in the form of flat, firm slabs, forty inches square, and three inches thick, to be dropped from the press into a barge for daily removal.' Estimating the population of London as 2,700,000, the amount of solid and liquid excrement thrown into the sewers every day is about 3000 tons, of which the annual value is nearly L.850,000. In these figures we see that the question is one of first-rate importance to trade and agriculture, as well as to sanitary science and the improvement of towns.

The Society which was formed last autumn for Public Readings, with Lord Brougham as president, have found their labours hitherto encouragingly successful. A number of gentlemen who can read well announce an evening meeting, admission one penny, and they read aloud selections from entertaining authors; and so a rational evening's amusement is afforded at a trifling cost. A few seats are reserved for such persons as prefer to pay a shilling; but the object is to secure the attendance of the working-classes, and they do attend. It would perhaps hardly do to announce that the men might bring their pipes; but their wives might be allowed to bring their needle-work; and it would be a pretty sight to see the women sewing and listening. The experiment so far justifies what Sir George Grey and others said in favour of entertaining books in their speeches during last vacation. Some of our principal railways have established a library and reading society; the General Post-office has followed the example, and while the class of clerks are thus provided for, it is quite in accordance with the spirit of the times that those who work with their hands should not be neglected.

An Illuminating Art Union has been formed, to give employment to ladies in the illumination of books: a pretty art, wherein fancy and imagination may find free scope. An exhibition of the finished works is promised for next summer.—The Vernon Gallery is now removed to a place near the Sheepshanks collection at the Kensington Museum, because Marlborough House is to be got ready for the Prince of Wales. Some people fear that the remove will be final, and that the pictures will not be brought back to London. It appears to be certain, however, that the National Gallery is to remain in Trafalgar Square, where more room will be made by the departure of the Royal Academy, who, having grown rich with L.170,000 in the funds, have offered to build a house for themselves, if government will give them a site. We hear that it is in contemplation to build a palatial edifice on the grounds of Burlington House, in which to lodge the Royal Academy, the Royal Society, with other scientific societies, and perhaps a department of the civil service.

A leviathan of literature has been launched upon us from the other side of the Atlantic—a work of a magnitude worthy of the country of the Mississippi and of Niagara—being no less than *A Dictionary of English and American Authors*,* *Living and Deceased*, and containing 30,000 biographies and literary notices! Only the first of the two proposed volumes has as yet been published, but that is not 'a pocket volume,' or 'a companion for a summer's ramble,' by any means. The number of authors already noticed exceeds 17,000, so that the boast expressed in the preface, that this work is *intended to be to the literature of the language what a dictionary of words is to the language itself*, is not unreasonable.

Thoroughly American is the prospectus, which, in insisting upon the quantity which a purchaser of this book will get for his money, informs us that it (vol. i.) consists of '1005 pages, imperial double column, minion and nonpareil type, about 200 lines on each page on an average, the volume containing upwards of two millions of words;' which, if anybody doubts, he is quite at liberty to count them himself.

Certainly it seems to us that the author has used a very charitable sieve in sifting his materials. Is it possible that there are really 175 great writers of the name of Brown or Browne? 153 Clarks or Clarkes? 110 Johnsons? or (think of this, ye Joneses, who have been so long unreasonably ashamed of your insignificance!) 189 Joneses? A large number of these gentlemen, to be sure, are citizens of the United States, where the title of 'one of the most remarkable men in this country,' is, we have read, rather easily obtained. Of the undue prominence which is given to American authors, we present this instance: Oliver Wendell Holmes occupies, a whole page and a half of this gigantic volume, while Robert Browning is compressed into half a column! Nevertheless, the work is doubtless a valuable contribution, and deserves high credit for the honourable ambition which suggested it, and the labour, perseverance, and research which must have been expended upon its production.

In a very interesting lecture upon the Preservation and Restoration of Books and their Bindings, delivered by Mr Leighton, this month, before the Society of Arts, we read of a process, in restoring and repairing single leaves, which greatly aids the bookbinder—namely, the splitting of sheets of paper. 'To shew how valuable this is at times, I will tell you how a rare old book was made complete, that otherwise could never have been made so, the fact being that the printer had turned his sheet the wrong way in perfecting the impression from his types—thus, every leaf was backed by text due some pages in advance or arrear, and it was not until every leaf of that sheet was split, and each page united to its proper fellow, that the book could be called complete. Little did the printer of old, when he plied his press in Spain, centuries ago, think that his error would thus have been corrected here. The rare old book was on Painting, by Pacheco, the master and father-in-law of Velasquez, and is now in the possession of Mr Stirling of Keir; having been patched and completed from a duplicate copy in the possession of the Earl Ellesmere.'

Speaking of 'dummy-doors,' sometimes absolutely necessary in a library for the concealment of closets, and the maintenance of general uniformity, Mr Leighton gives us this pleasant information. 'The titles of the works selected (for these mock-volumes) ought at once to indicate the fictitious nature of the spot. In the collections of the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth, and the late Samuel Rogers, in London, these false backs were made the medium of much wit: instead of mock Miltons and spurious Shakspeares, tall Thomsons and short Spensers, fat Bacons and thin Longfellows, were to be found such books as, *The Circle Squared*, *Nebuchadnezzar on Grasses*, *The Babylon Court Guide*, *Sir C. Hatton on Dancing*, *Canute on Tidal Waves*, *Photographs of the Ancients*, &c.; these, with the titles of unwritten works of great authors, affording matter for thought.'

A SWIM FOR LIFE.

About twenty years ago, a man-of-war belonging to her Britannic Majesty was lying at anchor in the principal harbour of Antigua, which, as most people know, forms one of the group called the West India Islands, and belongs to the British.

It was a hot sultry day in the beginning of June. The heavy fog which at that time of year occasionally hangs like a curtain over everything, had been dispersed by the heat of the sun's rays, and like a retreating enemy, was rolling slowly back to the horizon. Not a breath of wind stirred the water, not a sea-gull flapped its wing round the ship. The long pennon drooped lazily from the mast, as though sharing in the general languor of nature. The surface of the sea was like a mirror, only disturbed by an occasional black fin, that rippled lazily through the water for a little distance, and disappeared as its possessor sunk again into the depths beneath. As the sun, however, rose towards the meridian, a breeze began to spring up—not cool and steady, but coming now and then in irregular puffs, and hot as the breath of an oven. Notwithstanding the suspicious appearance of the weather, and the rapid fall of the thermometer, a party of midshipmen asked permission to take the pinnace for a few hours' sail, and obtained it, but on the condition that they should not go far from the ship. The party, consisting of six middies and two mates, started, accordingly, in great spirits, notwithstanding the warning growls of some of the old tars. Thoughtless and fearless as English sailors generally are, they paid little attention to the freshening wind, and the fast altering appearance of the sky. The tide was running out with great force, and they were soon outside the mouth of the harbour, and slipping down the side of the island with a fair wind, and with the full strength of the ebb. One of the mates was at the helm, a middy with the sheets, the rest stretched lazily about the boat, smoking and talking, when, like a thunderbolt, a violent squall struck them, and the light boat capsized in an instant. All its crew were immersed, but soon made their appearance again, swimming like corks on the surface; and in a short time were collected like a flock of water-fowl on the keel of their upturned boat. When they had shaken the water out of their eyes, looked about them a little, and found their numbers undiminished, they held a consultation on their condition, and the chances for and against their rescue. The prospect of affairs was certainly not inspiriting, and to people possessed of less buoyant dispositions than themselves, would have appeared hopeless. They were clinging to the wreck of a small boat, their ship was hidden from sight by clouds of rain—for the storm had now come on in all its fury—and the land was invisible from the same cause. The sea was rising fast, the wind blowing a perfect hurricane, and, worse than all, they were drifting with full force of wind and tide into the Caribbean Sea; once there, out of the track of vessels and far from any land, their fate would be certain. Such being the state of things, many hopes were expressed that the ship would send boats in search of them. Comfortable suggestions, but with too little foundation. At last, the two eldest determined upon a plan, which nothing but the desperate emergency of the case could have suggested. It was to attempt to swim ashore. The land was about three miles from them; they were both first-rate swimmers, and, as far as the distance was concerned, might have attempted it on a calm day without much fear of failure; but in a heavy sea the case was different, and both wind and tide, though not dead against them, combined to sweep them down under the lee of the island. Above all, the place swarmed with sharks. Nothing daunted, however, these two brave fellows stripped to the skin, and, after a short good-bye, and a hurried exhortation to the big ones to hold the little ones on, and all to keep up their pluck, they leaped into the sea.

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* Allibone's *Dictionary of Authors*. Child and Peterson, Philadelphia; Trubner and Co., London.

I cannot describe with what feelings they left their little boat, which, though a frail support enough, seemed like an ark of refuge, when compared to the pitiless waves, to whose mercy they committed themselves. They had both resolved to stick to one another as long as they lasted, both for mutual encouragement, and as some sort of protection against the much-dreaded sharks. For nearly an hour they swam on, sometimes lying on their backs to rest, sometimes striking out again for dear life. Up to this time, although much fatigued, they had seen no sharks; and they were encouraged by a glimpse, through a break in the gale, of the land, as it rose dark and forbidding above its white fringe of breakers. But all at once, without a moment's notice, they were surrounded on all sides by the black fins; an exclamation of despair forced itself from them at this sight, and both waited in agony of suspense for the moments of pain which were to end their existence; still they mechanically swam on, and, to their surprise, the sharks, although playing all round them, did not touch them. They made continual short rushes at them, and when the poor fellows closed their eyes in all the agony of death, passed by them; or turning on their backs, they would open their monstrous jaws and close their teeth with a loud clash within a few inches of their victim's body. One of these men said afterwards that he felt at that time like a mouse in the power of a cat, that plays with the poor wretch before she makes her supper off it. Still, however, they swam on, the thunder roaring, the lightning flashing above them, struggling against a heavy sea, terrific wind, and strong tide, tired and exhausted, with these horrid monsters swimming round them. One often reads of nights of terror that turn a man's hair gray. Many of these may be considered peaceful, when compared with the horrors of that five hours' swim. At last, however, they succeeded in nearing the extreme end of the island; the sharks one by one left them; the last, however, made a farewell plunge at the lad nearest him, and though he missed him with his teeth, struck him a violent blow in the stomach with his strong tail. The poor fellow called out; and his companion, who was swimming a few yards in advance, though thoroughly exhausted, returned to his friend's assistance; he supported him until he recovered sufficiently to proceed, and at last they once more touched the firm ground. They struggled up the beach, and lay down for a few minutes utterly worn out; but the thought of their comrades clinging to that upturned boat roused them to fresh exertions. After staggering on for about half a mile in the direction of some houses, they met a number of negroes, who, as our heroes were entirely naked, attacked them with stones, and they would in all probability have fallen victims to this 'nigger' sense of decency, had not an officer fortunately passed by at the moment and recognised them.

In a few minutes, their story was told, and prompt measures were adopted to rescue the remainder of the party. Boats were quickly launched under the lee of the island, and the two mates, although nearly dead from exhaustion, persisted in embarking in them. The danger was not yet over, for the sea was running mountains high; the gale had little abated, and the night was coming on fast. After a long and hard pull, nothing could be seen of the missing ones. It had become quite dark, and they were beginning to despair. One boat had already turned towards the shore, when, by the light of a vivid flash, they saw on the crest of a huge black wave the dismantled boat with its knot of half-drowned boys. They soon pulled up to it, and found to their great joy the number complete. They, too, had begun to despair; had feared their two brave comrades had perished; were wearied and half suffocated by the constant seas that were continually breaking over them; and some were talking of loosing their hold when the timely relief arrived.

On reaching the shore, the two brave mates gave in. The reaction which followed their exertions and exposure was great and dangerous. One died, a victim to his heroism; the other lived, but his health was seriously injured, and his powers of mind affected by all that he had gone through; for months afterwards he would start up in his bed with a shriek of terror as he saw, in all the vivid reality of dreamland, those monstrous sharks glaring at him, and heard the gnash of their sharp teeth.

This wonderful escape can only be accounted for by the fact, that the spot where they landed was the site of the slaughter-house for the troops, and that the sharks were so sated with the offal thrown into the sea at that time, that even the unusual delicacy of 'white man' could not tempt them. If, however, only a few drops of blood had tinged the water, the case would have been very different; for sharks, like beasts of prey, are roused to fury at the sight of it, and in the condition of these two poor fellows, the slightest scratch would have been instantly fatal to them.

CHARITY.

O LOVE, how wondrous thou and holy;
When nought on earth hath power to quell
The iron might of melancholy,
One touch of thine hath snapt the spell.

One vigil by a fevered bed—
One solace given to heart opprest—
One pang assuaged, one aching head
With gentlest soothing lulled to rest:

To weary age one fond caress,
Poor guerdon for the love of years—
One smile at childhood's playfulness,
Or patient care to dry its tears;

Or less than these—the common flow
Of simple, self-forgetting mirth,
When veils the heart its inner woe,
So not to cloud the social hearth:

These, when, as locked in polar ice,
Lifeless and crushed the heart has lain—
These, like a breath from paradise,
Have warmed it into life again.

O gentlest minstrel! thou canst tell
What best can soothe the troubled breast:
'He prayeth well who loveth well!
He prayeth best who loveth best!'

E.

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SHOEBURY NESS.

'Yesterday, the monster gun was burst at Shoebury Ness.' Newspaper readers are now and then attracted by some such announcement as this—varied occasionally by the pleasant alternative that the gun was *not* burst. What all this means, is not very clear to persons unacquainted with military matters. What is Shoebury Ness? Where is Shoebury Ness? Why do people burst guns at Shoebury Ness?—Let us attempt a reply.

Shoebury Ness, then, is a point of land jutting out from the coast of Essex, at a spot a little beyond the limits of the Thames. A walk of just four miles or so from the holiday beach at Southend will bring us to it. Speaking in round terms, without pretending to be quite correct, we may say that the Ness is a string of negatives—it has no people, no houses, no horses, no cattle, no trees, no fields. It is a ragged patch of sand, partly covered with ragged grass. True, there is a village of Shoebury some way inland; but the Ness itself has no signs of civilisation save those which military folks have planted there. It is about the last place in England where we should think of having a picnic with a pleasure-party.

And good reason that it should be so; for there is rough work at Shoebury Ness. All guns and mortars, carronades and howitzers, require to be *proved* before they are allowed to take rank among the Queen's implements of war; and most especially is this the case when the pieces of ordnance involve any novelties in their construction. They must shew that they can bear a bursting charge far greater than will ever be applied to them in actual war; that they can carry a shot or shell to the proper distance; that the missiles do not chafe or heat the bore too much; and that the recoil is not in excess. All this must be done; and a great deal of booming, and banging, and bursting naturally results. Woolwich is the chief scene of operations in an ordinary way, or rather the marshy ground between Plumstead and the river; but when anything more formidable has to be tried, the authorities prefer Shoebury, where the paucity of houses and people, and the seaward direction of one face of the Ness, offer advantages not to be met with further west up the Thames' estuary. There is a small artillery establishment at the Ness, under the direction of Colonel Mitchell; it is an offshoot from the artillery department at Woolwich, from which it receives all orders. To some small extent, it is a practice or exercise ground—for foot-artillery to learn how to handle pieces of ordnance; and for horse-artillery to be brigaded on the sands, which are of extraordinary breadth at low-water; but the main object in view is to test large or novel pieces of ordnance, especially where a 'long range' is to be attempted. It is a rambling sort of place. Here are shears or triangles by which heavy guns are slung up to be fired without any support underneath; here are huge oaken beams furnishing temporary support for guns to be fired at different elevations; here are mortars bedded into a sort of gravel-pit, where they might play a good many antics without doing much harm. At one spot, keeping guard like a giant, is a mortar larger than any ordinarily used in the British army; it is a monster, a yard and a half in external diameter, half a yard in *thickness* of iron, and carrying a shell which weighs five hundred pounds, even when empty. At other places are magazines for powder; laboratories for some of the chemistry of war; barracks for a troop or two of artillerymen; mess-rooms for a few officers; a pier at which guns can be landed from vessels at high-water; heaps of round shot in one place; heaps of unfilled shells in another. Seldom does a day pass without noisy evidence of what is going on; and now and then something worse than noise results; for the artillerymen cannot always shield themselves from the fatal consequences of the bursting of a gun, too weak to bear the test to which it is subjected.

The activity in this department of the military art, during the last five years, has been something extraordinary. The War-office authorities have had five or six hundred inventions brought under their notice within that time, bearing relation to different munitions of war; and it has been a sorely difficult matter to deal with; for every inventor insists that his novelty is *the* great thing which was needed, the rejection of which he at once attributes to official favouritism or stupidity. It was soon after the Russian war commenced that this activity began to shew itself; but the long delay in capturing Sebastopol, and the abandonment in despair of any attempt whatever to capture Cronstadt, set the wits of inventors to work with extraordinary activity. As ordinary balls and shells, shot forth from ordinary guns and mortars, were found ineffective, a passion for *monsters* gradually sprang up. The amount of money spent on these monsters has been as monstrous as the things themselves; and, after all, an opinion is now gaining ground that the monster theory is not the true one; that what we want is, not so much the power of throwing enormous masses of iron, as that of commanding a great range, and attaining accuracy of flight in the projectile. That the next European war will be a terrible one, so far as gunnery operations are concerned, is admitted by all who are best entitled to give an opinion; and it may not be uninteresting to notice here a few of the attempted novelties, in the shape of large ordnance, above adverted to.

The 'Lancaster Oval Gun' was one of the first of these novelties which obtained the decided and extensive patronage of the government. It has been a source of great vexation to all parties that this gun, after a large expenditure incurred in relation to it, has fallen into disfavour, on account of the non-realisation of certain advantages expected from it. In this gun, a cannon of large bore, Mr Lancaster succeeded in producing a spirally grooved interior, like that of the rifle which now so largely supersedes the old musket; moreover, the cross section of the bore, taken at any point in its length, exhibits an oval shape—intended to facilitate the action of the rifling. In November 1854, when the strength of Sebastopol became unmistakably known to the British government, it was decided to send out a large supply of Lancaster shells, to be used with the guns; and that another supply should be sent out with the Baltic fleet under Sir Charles Napier in the following spring. There was no machinery in existence to make these shells rapidly, and no building in which to place such machinery. Under these circumstances, Messrs Fox and Henderson undertook to build a Lancaster shell-factory in Woolwich Arsenal, and to complete it in a few weeks. This was done in early winter with a degree of rapidity and completeness inexplicable to those who are acquainted only with the slow movements of government departments. Meanwhile, the machinery had been in preparation; and most extensive it was—for it comprised furnaces, steam-hammers, lathes, and other appliances in great number. All this was for making the Lancaster shells only, the guns being mostly made at some of the large foundries in the north. Each shell was of iron, either eight or ten inches in diameter. In the first place, plates of iron were prepared, two feet square, and one inch thick; these plates were heated red hot, bent round into a cylindrical form, and moulded by a steam-hammer. The cylinder being again heated, one end was hammered up and closed in hemispherical form; being again heated, the other end was pressed somewhat conical. Other machines finally completed the shaping, severed the pointed end, and made a fitting receptacle for the fuse which was to ignite the combustible matters to be placed within the shells. These shells were so difficult to make, that L.30 a piece had been paid for them when made by hand; this was reduced to L.6, and afterwards to L.2, when the machinery was completed. About 200 shells a day could be made by the machinery. At first, it was believed that the expenditure of L.25,000 on the shell-factory was a wise liberality; but unfortunately the Lancaster guns have gone out of favour. It is found that the iron shells are too unyielding to accommodate themselves readily to the spiral rifling of the bore; and, moreover, that the curve of this rifling, only one-fourth of a turn or circumference, is too small to insure that directness of flight which it is the chief object of rifling to produce. Many of the guns were burst in consequence of this non-yielding of the shell; and of those which did not burst, the accuracy of flight did not at all satisfy the artillerymen. Hence the Lancaster gun is at present under a cloud, though its great ingenuity may possibly lead to a new application some day.

While, and after, these operations were being planned and executed, numberless theories and suggestions came in from other quarters. The *Times* could hardly make room for the letters of correspondents who, under the signatures of 'Cast Iron,' 'Wrought Iron,' 'Hammered Iron,' &c., took different sides in the question as to the relative merits of cast iron and wrought iron for large ordnance, of rifled bores and smooth bores, of muzzle-loading and breech-loading, of round-shot, of round shells, and of elongated shells. We find the names of Nasmyth, Whitworth, Fairbairn, Mallet, Horsfall, Forrester, Britten, Disney, Norton, Dundonald, Parkes, Krapp, and scores of others, engaged in these controversies; and the House of Commons was frequently called upon to settle conflicting claims, of the merits of which its members could know very little. Let us touch upon a few of the schemes.

In November 1854, Mr Nasmyth, of the Patricroft Engineering Works, and inventor of the world-renowned steam-hammer, wrote to the *Times*, stating that as, in his opinion, the failure at Sebastopol and in the Baltic had been due to our want of *large* ordnance, he proposed to make *wrought*-iron guns, which would be much tougher than cast-iron, and would throw shells of two or three hundredweight to a vast distance. 'Had I but the opportunity given me to bring all the experience on this subject I possess to bear, I should go heart and soul into it, and would shew what my steam-hammer could do to solve the fearful problem.' This was so hearty and English-like, that Mr Nasmyth received a large degree of encouragement, first from private persons, and then from the government. Yet the Nasmyth gun, like the Lancaster, has lost ground; some or other of the many mechanical difficulties which surround this subject have been fatal to it. More than once the mortifying announcement has been seen in the newspapers, that a Nasmyth gun had 'burst' under trial. This bursting arose from a cause wholly unexpected. The iron acquired a peculiar molecular structure while under beating and hammering, which rendered it unfit to resist a bursting action. Slabs of iron were welded by a 4-ton steam-hammer into a huge shapeless mass, eight feet long by three or four thick; and this mass was turned and bored into a cannon. The size was, indeed, so enormous, that the gun carried a ball nearly half a ton-weight, shaped something like an oblate spheroid cut at one end. Every one was sorry to find that the molecular structure of these ponderous forgings was not good, and that a most ingenious man was thus disappointed.

The Mersey Iron Company's gun was another monster. Like the 'Nasmyth,' it was forged solid, then turned and bored. When finished it was 15 feet long, 44 inches diameter at the breech, had a bore 13 inches diameter, weighed 24 tons, carried a shot of nearly 300 pounds, and cost L.3000. The gun did a good deal of shattering against thick slabs of iron, large bulks of timber, &c., in trials at various distances; but we believe there has not been a second one made—perhaps the L.3000 somewhat startled the government, especially after the failure of the Nasmyth gun.

Lord Palmerston, for many months, was—perhaps unduly—honoured by having a huge mortar named after him. He appears to have ordered it to be made without waiting for the sanction of his secretary for war. This mortar, no less than 36-inch bore, was composed of wrought-iron hoops, 9 inches broad, and 3½ thick, laid over and beside each other. The Low Moor Iron Company made cast-iron shells for this mortar, or for one of similar bore, weighing about 26 hundredweight each, and requiring machinery to lift them into the mortar. On the very first trial, the monster burst—the maker throwing the blame on the awkwardness of the artillerymen. And so there was an end of the Palmerston mortar.

Mr Britten, connected with Messrs Mandslay's engineering firm, introduced to the government a new form of shell, which he induced them to try in the autumn of 1855. It was cast, not wrought; and it could be adapted to any gun, after a slight alteration, which might be effected on shore or on shipboard. He promised that the shell, with half the usual charge, should go further, and more accurately than a solid shot; and certainly, in an experiment made at Shoebury, a 14½ pound Britten shell was fired from a 9-pound ordinary gun, with less powder, greater range, and greater accuracy, than is usual. He asserted in the sanguine language of most inventors on these subjects; 'In a very short period, I could work out results which would eventually lead us to as complete a revolution in our system of artillery as that which is now in course of progress in small-arms.' What has been done; and if nothing, why nothing—the War-office knows best; but Mr Britten has fought a hard battle with the authorities.

Mr Whitworth, the eminent machinist of Manchester, brought under the attention of the government certain matters connected with the manufacture of rifles; proposing the attainment of minute accuracy by means in which he is wholly unrivalled among our engineers. From rifled muskets his researches extended to rifled cannon, one particular form of which he began to manufacture and experiment upon. The bore which he adopted was polygonal, neither round nor oval; the interior was nine-sided, cast in three pieces of three sides each, then brought together edge to edge, and bound round with wrought-iron rings. Mr Whitworth hoped to combine the best qualities of cast, wrought, and Lancaster guns. His hopes have not been realised. In May 1858, a polygonal gun was tried at Shoebury, carrying a 32-pound shot; it burst on the fourth discharge. Another gun of nearly the same construction, but of larger dimensions, was tried at Portsmouth in October of the same year, and burst at the sixth round. A third, tried at Shoebury last December, gave way on the ninth discharge. Thus the Whitworth, like the rest, also fell to a discount—leaving as a future problem the investigation into the causes of failure. The unyielding nature of iron shells for a rifled bore is believed to be the chief obstacle to the Whitworth and to the Lancaster guns.

Mr Dundas, of the Paragon Works, induced the Ordnance to try a new gun of his, made in a peculiar way. Four quarter-cylinders of wrought-iron, with edges truly planed, were placed edge to edge, and were bound together with two layers of wrought-iron rings struck on hot. The gun underwent many trials at Woolwich and at Shoebury, and bore them well; but the expense was very great; and the Dundas gun seems now to share the oblivion of many others.

M. Krapp, a steel manufacturer at Essen, in Rhenish Prussia, brought over to England a steel gun, which the government put to trial. It was believed to be the largest piece of cast steel in existence, weighing more than three tons: this was the inner part only; it was raised to nine tons by an outer jacket or covering of cast iron. It shot forth a long conical shell weighing nearly 260 pounds. When tried at Woolwich in November 1855, the gun burst on the first discharge, and sent into the air shattered fragments of what had cost L.1500. M. Krapp blamed the artillerymen; the artillerymen blamed the gun; and all parties were dissatisfied.

But we must end this enumeration, or we shall have no space left for one special invention, which is at present a subject of much public talk—the *Armstrong gun.* Let us then pass unnoticed Shortridge's new steel gun, intended to be six times as strong as one of cast iron—Parkes's new gunpowder, which bursts a shell into fragments more violently than ordinary powder—Fairbairn's new gun, made to try the excellence of different kinds of cast iron—Longridge's cast-iron gun, bound round with iron wire—Lawrence's compound shot, for use with rifled cannon—Tulk's 'belemnite' shot, shaped after the shell of the same name—Forrester's mortar of Canadian charcoal iron, something near fifteen tons in weight—Disney's 'infernal fluid,' which, scattered by an exploding shell, will set fire to any and every thing—Dundonald's devastator, the terrible properties of which have been mysteriously talked about for more than half a century—Wade's projectile, consisting of a dozen large Congreve rockets bound round a bomb of gunpowder—Roberts's mortar-vessel, by which a five-ton mortar may be slung almost as easily as the pendulum of a clock—the iron-cased floating batteries, on which such vast sums have been spent, and of which the true value has yet to be determined—Norton's suggestion of attaching shells to rockets, and firing without any gun or mortar—Boxer's fuse for shrapnell shells, containing four hundred bullets in each shell—Shaw's formidable battery of rifles—Macintosh's project of fighting a naval battle by covering the sea with an abominable naphthalic fluid, which is to blind and suffocate the enemy, but not those who use it. Let us leave these dreadful things, and say a few words in conclusion concerning 'the Armstrong.'

In accordance with the natural obstinacy of human nature, when we are told there is a secret, we have a sudden yearning to know all about it. The government have thought proper to make a secret of the Armstrong gun; and as a consequence, all the journals are striving for a peep behind the curtain. It is not difficult to see who will conquer in the long-run; but it *is* difficult to account for a belief among officials that they can keep these things from the knowledge of the tax-payers who are to provide the means. Of course the main object is to keep the truth from such foreign powers as may one day be our enemies; but this is futile; French and Russian agents generally ferret out these things, when the English people themselves know little about it. So far as the records of the Patent Office are concerned, there is something revealed, but not much. Mr W. G. Armstrong, a civil engineer of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, took out three patents in 1857–58. One was for a mode of forming guns with an inner tube of wrought iron or gun-metal, surrounded by rings of wrought iron or gun-metal struck on hot. The gun was also breech-loading; by turning a screw, an opening was exposed through which a shell or shot and charge could be introduced, and the screw brought all up tight again in a very ingenious way. In another patent, Mr Armstrong devised a remarkable mode of aiming a gun *at night*, or in utter darkness: certain observations are to be made during daylight, to determine the azimuth and altitude of the object to be aimed at; and then, by means of a graduated arc, and another simple contrivance, the proper pointing of the gun can be re-discovered at night. In the third patent, two fuses are described, full of ingenuity—one to insure, almost to a second, the exact time that a shell shall explode after leaving the mortar; the other, to cause the shell to explode by concussion against any solid object. Now, two out of these three patents appear to have been stopped on their progress to the Great Seal, whereby the specifications have never been published. The inference is, that the government made an arrangement for buying up the secrets, with a view to ulterior purposes. There is also evidence that Mr Armstrong has invented something very novel and important in the shape and constitution of a shell to be used with his gun; and also a shot, to attain great range without any bursting effect. Various facts on this subject were known to professional men and engineering manufacturers; but the month of February in the present year told the public something further on the subject. The dignified *Court Circular* announced that, at the first *levée* for the season, Mr W. G. Armstrong received the honour of knighthood, and was presented to her Majesty on his appointment to a new office—a sort of chief-engineer of a Rifled-ordnance Department. A day or two afterwards, the announcement was made that General Peel, Secretary of State for War, accompanied Sir W. G. Armstrong to Woolwich, and officially inducted him into his new sphere of duty. About the same time, the Newcastle newspapers told of a large new factory which is being built at Elswick near that town, by or for Sir W. G. Armstrong, and supposed to be intended for the manufacture of government guns and shot and shells; but a tone of semi-mystery prevailed: either the journalists did not know more, or they would not tell. The latest phase has been a jubilation that a Newcastle civil engineer should be made a knight; and that military etiquette should have been broken through, in order that 'the right man' might be put 'in the right place.'

Meanwhile, the government are trying hard to keep their secret. At Newcastle, the plans and organisation are known only to the persons concerned. At Shoebury, what they *have* they will not shew, and what they *know*, they are chary in telling. At Woolwich, on the day when Sir W. G. Armstrong entered on his duties, one of his guns was tried, with all sorts of screens and contrivances for shielding it from the public eye; and an unfortunate artist (an *Illustrated* contributor, possibly) was mildly captured, and compelled to give up the sketch he was drawing. If this does not whet curiosity to the bursting-point, we shall be surprised. Already a scientific journal has given plans and sections of what the editor *believes* to be the construction of the Armstrong gun.

In a few words, then, the case seems to be this, so far as the public have the means of knowing: The Armstrong gun consists of an inner cast-metal cylinder, bound round with wrought-metal rings in two or more layers, struck on hot to make the binding more fast. The interior is rifled, to give that kind of rotation to the projectile which is intended to insure straightness of course. It is *light*, almost beyond precedent, so as to be easily moved on the field of battle or on board ship. Its breech is so curiously formed that, by making two or three turns of a large screw, an opening is revealed, large enough to admit a shot or shell; and the turning of this screw in a reverse direction closes all up again tightly. The bore is slightly smaller at the muzzle than the breech, so as to lessen the 'windage.' There are contrivances, removable at pleasure, for aiming the gun almost as accurately by night as by day. The shot is three times as long as it is in diameter; it is of iron, but is covered with lead, in order that it may take the form of the rifled grooves in the interior of the gun—a difficulty which has been fatal to the iron projectiles of the Lancaster and Whitworth guns. The shell (which may be used instead of a shot) is built up in an extraordinary way, with many dozens of separate pieces of sharp-edged iron; these, when burst, will become much more terrible than the fragments of an ordinary shell—because they will all separate, they will scatter to a great distance, and each one will be large enough to do its deadly work. There are fuses for attachment to the shell, which will cause explosion either after the lapse of a predetermined space of time, or on striking a solid object. As to the results actually obtained, they seem to be marvellous in *range* and *accuracy*, not in the size of the missile thrown, for that has not been aimed at. There is rumour of *five miles* having been reached—of an Armstrong shot penetrating six feet into solid oaken beams placed one behind another—of a gun so light that two men can carry it, and yet that its shot shall reach a couple of miles—and of an accuracy of flight almost equalling that of an Enfield rifle.

Long may it be before we are engaged in another war! When that calamity comes, we may perchance hear something more of the Armstrong gun.

Since the above was written, the Secretary of State for War has made an interesting communication to the House of Commons concerning the Armstrong gun. Compressed into as short a space as possible, it amounts to this: That the invention of this gun is regarded by the War-office as the most important of modern improvements in ordnance; that the weight of the gun is only one-third that of the common gun, relatively to the weight of the shot used; that the shell is so constructed as to act as solid shot, hollow shot, or charged shell, at pleasure; that with 5 pounds of powder, one of these guns has sent a 32-pound shot more than five miles; that its accuracy is quite unprecedented among ordnance—the striking of an object at 1000 yards' distance being almost an absolute certainty; and that the principle once admitted, it might be applied to guns of heavy battering-power, as well as to those for producing great range and accuracy of flight. The new works at Newcastle are being constructed under an arrangement which gives the government a virtual control over them. As to the personal question, it appears that Sir W. Armstrong has withdrawn his patents in favour of the government; that he has retired from the establishment at Newcastle; that he is to receive, spread over a series of years, a certain sum of money, partly as a purchase-price for the patents, partly as salary for filling the duties of his new office—Chief-engineer of Rifled Ordnance.

THE LONDON MERCHANT.

Mr Robert Lewson was, to all appearance, a prosperous London merchant and citizen, a thoroughly shrewd, and astonishingly active, man of business—perfectly just in his dealings, economical, almost parsimonious in his expenditure, and of cold, rigid habits and manners—a matter-of-fact man of the world, in short, and without a particle of what is called sentiment in his composition. A little more than twenty years previously, he had arrived a very young and almost penniless man in London, and accepted a situation as warehouseman at a very low salary in the establishment of Mr James Ridges, merchant of Friday Street, Cheapside, and a methodical, hard, pushing man. Lewson's eager diligence, specially recommended him to his sharp-sighted employer; and as he proved to be an excellent penman and accountant, he was soon transferred to the counting-house, and rapidly advanced both as to position and salary. He was a powerful, gay-eyed, bright-complexioned young fellow when he entered the establishment, and the five succeeding years scarcely changed his personal appearance. His step was as elastic, his spirit as jocund, his glance as merry, his laugh as gleeful as before, when a change, sudden as it was complete, passed over him; and this, too, at a moment when his fortunes appeared brighter, more promising, than ever. The managing clerk and cashier died suddenly; and Lewson, though scarcely five-and-twenty years of age, was immediately promoted to the vacant place at a salary of two hundred and fifty pounds per annum. I had a few months before entered the establishment as junior clerk, and I lodged in the same house that he did, in King Street, he occupying the front, and I the back attic; and hearing from the landlady that Mr Lewson had spoken of leaving, and was, in fact, in search of a suitable house within easy distance of the city, I concluded that he was about to change his mode of life. My impression was that he had left some damsel amidst the sunny glades and leafy woods of his native Somersetshire, who, now that competence had been secured, would speedily appear to share the home he had with such ceaseless energy and thrift provided. I was, it seemed, mistaken. On the arrival of the post-letters one morning when Mr Ridges was out, I took them, as was customary, to Mr Lewson, who happened at the time to be engaged in a distant part of the premises. I had not returned to my desk more than five minutes when a warehouseman came running to announce that Mr Lewson had fallen down in a fit. I and the other clerks immediately hastened to the spot, and there, sure enough, we found him on the floor, ghastly pale, trembling convulsively, and partially insensible. He held, I noticed, an open letter tightly grasped in his right hand. He recovered presently, but left the office, and returned to his lodgings for that day.

The next morning, he entered the counting-house at his usual hour, replied impatiently to the inquiries made after his health, and was soon eagerly engaged in the details of business, to which, changed as he was in other respects, he continued as much or more than ever devoted. Indeed, I sometimes fancied that he was absolutely afraid of permitting his attention to flag, or be diverted to other thoughts. This unflagging zeal and activity met with a just and natural reward. By the time Mr Lewson had attained the age of thirty, he was admitted a partner in the firm; and ultimately, when abundant wealth and increasing years indisposed Mr Ridges for further active exertion, that gentleman retired from the business, and Mr Lewson, only then about forty years old, became sole head of the establishment he had entered about one-and-twenty years before as warehouseman, at a salary of one guinea per week.

During the sixteen years that had elapsed since the sudden attack experienced by Mr Lewson, one or two circumstances had occurred which threw a partial light on the exciting cause of that brief, sharp illness. He was one day—not long after his admission as a partner—running over the columns of the *Times*, when a half-stifled cry escaped him. The ghastly paleness and convulsion of his features which I had once before seen, recurred, and I thought he would have fallen from his seat. By a powerful effort of will, he succeeded in mastering the emotion which shook him, then seized his hat, hurried out of the premises, and did not return for several hours. As soon as he was gone, I looked over the part of the paper he had been perusing, and read the following paragraph, the only one of any possible interest on that side of the journal: 'Foundered, in the Gulf of St Lawrence, the emigrant ship *Caroline*, of Bristol. Crew and passengers all lost.' Again, one evening when, waiting in Mr Lewson's room to deliver an important message, I chanced to take up a volume of the poetry of Burns—a book to which, I am almost ashamed to say, I was till then an entire stranger; it opened of itself, as it were, at a much-thumbed page; and as my glance ran over the invocation *To Mary in Heaven*, I at once recognised the verses to which I had heard Mr Lewson give faltering, despairing expression. I no longer doubted of the nature of the hurt he had received, from what quiver the broken shaft which still quivered in his side had flown, and which, to conceal from the world, and, if possible, from himself, he wrapped so closely around him the thick mantle of a cold, repellent worldliness. Yet, let me do him the justice to say, it was even then only to the busy, jostling, triumphant world that he there appeared. Numerous instances illustrative of the warm charity, the compassionate gentleness of his true character, came to my own knowledge; and these were, I doubted not, but a slight portion of the noiseless deeds of mercy which illumined and sanctified the flinty path he was treading, with bleeding feet, towards the quiet grave.

Thus had passed his life till one memorable evening, little more than six months subsequent to his becoming sole head of the former firm of Ridges and Lewson. It was the month of November, and the weather was cold, gloomy, and dispiriting. About nine o'clock, it came on wet; chill, drizzling, heavy mists fell; and as I turned from contemplating the desolate street, and wretched dripping figures which now and then shuffled hurriedly along, to resume, by the blazing fire, the reading of a book which much interested me, I felt an intense sensation of comfort and thankfulness. I had been reseated about a quarter of an hour when I heard Mr Lewson (for we still lodged in the same house, the only difference being, that he occupied the first floor, and I the second) enter the street-door, and presently ascend the stairs with, it immediately struck me, much quicker steps than usual. He did not pause for an instant at his own apartments, but came on with the same speed to the second floor. I looked up with a half-languid curiosity, which, the instant the door opened and disclosed the person of Mr Lewson, changed to extreme surprise and alarm. His garments were dripping wet, and his thick black hair hung in lank, loose disarray about his forehead and cheeks, of which the mortal paleness contrasted frightfully with the strange brightness that gleamed from out his wild, dark, staring eyes.

'Good Heaven!' I exclaimed, as I sprang upon my feet, 'what is the matter? What has occurred?'

The white lips quivered, ruffled for a moment by a half-maniacal smile which passed over them, and Mr Lewson glided without speaking to a chair, into which he dropped heavily.

A minute or two passed, during which we continued staring at each other like two speechless idiots, and then he said, hissed rather: 'The sea has given up its dead. She lives! I have beheld her once again.'

'Beheld whom—what?'

'Mary Somers. But you knew not. O merciful Heaven!' A strong convulsion shook him as he uttered these words. He essayed to rise, but his limbs failed him, and he fell forward with his face on the floor.

Greatly alarmed, I immediately summoned assistance. A neighbouring surgeon was sent for, and Mr Lewson, after being copiously bled, was restored to consciousness and comparative calm. As soon as the surgeon had retired, Mr Lewson called me to his bedside.

'Meredith,' he said, 'I sought you for the purpose of requesting a great service at your hands. My brain was confused, on fire just now; but I meant to say that I had seen Mary Somers, whom I believed had long since found a grave beneath the waters of the St Lawrence, and that—— But you shall know all from the beginning.

'I came, as I think you are aware, from Bath to London, when little more than twenty years of age. I was born and reared in the neighbourhood of that gay city, and for the last two years of our sojourn there, I was the chief support of my widowed mother. I was barely nineteen when she was laid in her peaceful grave. Close by us there dwelt a retired lieutenant of infantry, Mr Somers, and his only child, a daughter. Mary was two years younger than I, and my first remembrance of her is as of a golden-haired, blue-eyed cherub encircled by the light and holiness of infancy. We were playmates. I cannot tell you, if I would, by what degrees the boyish tenderness I felt for the angel-child deepened into an absorbing, bewildering love for the pure and beautiful girl—enough, that before twenty summers had passed over me, I lived but in her life, and in the sunshine of her presence felt a joy, an ecstasy, which as yet no shadow cast by the dim and uncertain future had power to trouble or obscure. Mr Somers did not discourage our intimacy; and it was not till the failure of the Bath house, in which I had been employed, compelled me to seek for means of livelihood elsewhere, that the possibility of separation from Mary Somers flashed upon me. Well do I remember each incident, word, tone of the last evening I passed in her presence. The profound devotion, the inflaming love which possessed and consumed me, found fitting, burning utterance, as with passionate incoherence I poured forth my whole soul at her feet. I was understood—more, infinitely more—I was soothed—consoled; and the silvery angel-voice even bade me hope! Eagerly I sought her father. He heard me with patience; and the supercilious smile, as at the frenzy of a boy, which at first slightly curled his lip, yielded to perfect seriousness long before I had concluded.

"I have a high opinion of you, Robert Lewson," he said—I remember every word he uttered, as if they had been spoken but yesterday—"and I am greatly mistaken if you are not of the stuff of which great, or, at all events, successful, prosperous men are made. I also fully believe, judging from the indomitable energy of character you have so early manifested, and which, happily for you, has been wisely directed by your excellent, strong-hearted mother, that the affection you have just avowed for Mary will prove no mere boyish fancy, but a lasting, deep-rooted passion. Still, you must fairly win before you wear her. You are about," he continued, for I hung with eager silence on his words, as if life or death was breaking from his lips, "you are about to enter the great world of realities. Mary has no fortune. Gain one—a competence, I mean—say two hundred pounds a year, less even than that, and she will have my consent to become your wife."

'I could have screamed for joy! This all that was required! That I, endowed with vigorous health, a fair education, and gifted with an iron energy, capable, I felt, of wrestling with, and overcoming any obstacle how great soever that barred my path, should acquire such slight wealth—scarcely a competence—why, this was what I should have myself proposed! I was only twenty, though strong and manlike beyond my years, and Mary was but eighteen. I thanked Mr Somers in the most extravagant terms—was, in fact, almost beside myself with exultation—and the morrow's sun had not yet risen, when I was bounding along with feet that hardly felt the ground, upon the road to London. Arrived here, I engaged, as you know, with Mr Ridges, and secretly exulted in shewing him how far even his own proverbial, dogged industry could be surpassed by the ceaseless, unquenchable energy of a mere boy in years. Coarse, but sufficient food, hard, unremitting toil, so far from shrinking from, I gloried in. The first five years I passed with Mr Ridges were happy, sunny years. I had banquets, too, rare, indeed, but priceless. I corresponded with Mr Somers, and at long intervals apart received business-like, brief replies; but ever underneath his signature were a few lines traced in sunlight, upon which I banqueted for days, months, years, as upon flowers of Paradise! To others, Meredith, this might appear unreal extravagance, but not, I think, to you, who must have had some touches of the ardent enthusiasm with which nature has so fatally gifted me.'

'Thus passed my life, till the death of Martin, the cashier, to whose office, you remember, I succeeded; and then I found that the beloved form which beckoned me with looks and words of love to a future luminous and radiant with her smiles, was but an air-drawn vision, a mirage of the desert, which, when I stretched forth my arms to embrace it, turned to sand, dust, dead-sea ashes!

'I had written to Mr Somers of my good-fortune—that the prescribed goal was more than attained; and I received by return of post an answer briefly stating that Mary Somers had been married a fortnight previously to a Mr Amory.—Men's hearts are tougher than they think,' continued Mr Lawson after an interval of silence, 'or that sudden and terrible blow must have destroyed me. Pride—indignation at what I believed to be the duplicity and baseness of Mary Somers, helped to blunt and mitigate the severity of the stroke; for I knew not then, nor till many months afterwards, how she, poor, ill-starred girl, had been entrapped, coerced into the marriage. Mr Somers had been always addicted to play; and this habit had of late grown upon him. He lost heavily—far more than his means could discharge—and in a fit of partial intoxication, involved himself criminally in some way—I never heard the precise history of the affair—which placed him at the mercy of Amory, also a gamester; and he, a long since rejected suitor for Mary's hand, offered her the alternative of immediate marriage with him, or of witnessing the shame and ruin of her father. Somers survived this sacrifice by about two years only; and it was from a letter—a humble, piteous letter, he addressed to me a few hours before his death, that I derived these imperfect particulars. Amory gradually sank lower and lower in the world, and at length, becoming bankrupt both in means and character, resolved on emigrating to America. He sailed with his family, I understood, in the *Caroline* from Bristol. That vessel foundered at sea; and the first shock of the intelligence over, I felt a mournful satisfaction in the thought that Mary Somers had escaped from a harsh and frowning world to heaven.

'I have little more to say,' resumed Mr Lewson, after a much longer interval of silence than before, and speaking with a broken voice and averted countenance. 'I was returning from Paddington yesterday evening, and took shelter for a few minutes from the rain in the wide doorway of a draper's shop in Tottenham Court Road. Presently a female, whose face I did not see, came out of the shop, and as she spoke to a man apparently waiting for her at the entrance, the voice which for twenty years I had only heard in my dreams, startled my waking sense. I turned eagerly towards them. They were both meanly, wretchedly clad; and the man, whose back was also to me, was now addressing his companion in harsh and menacing tones. She, I gathered from what he said, had just been paid some trifling, miserable wages for work she had brought home, and he was insisting upon having it to spend, it seemed, in liquor. She spoke again. I darted forward, looked in her face—it was indeed she; but, O God! how changed. I uttered an irrepressible cry of grief, astonishment, despair. They both looked up. She knew me, and with an exclamation, bitter as my own, hid her face with her hands, and hastened away, followed—for she still held the disputed money in her hand—by her husband. As soon as I recovered my presence of mind, I entered the shop, and procured her address. They did not know her name, but they directed me to the lodging they occupy in Goodge Street. You will find the address in full on yonder card. Seek them out, and arrange in the best manner you can for her, and of course for his support. There are children too—or at least there were. Be prompt and liberal. But, above all, be careful that *she* suspect not the source of the income you will assure to them. I know her well. Poverty, however extreme, would never tempt her to accept pecuniary assistance from me—from the man she so deeply, but unwillingly, blamelessly wronged. Farewell. You know my wishes; and I shall not expect to see you till you can say all is arranged.'

I hastened away, and was soon in Goodge Street, where I found the Amorys had lodged since their return from America, about two months previously, under the name of Randall. 'A gentle, modest, broken-hearted creature,' said the landlady, 'Mrs Randall was, but her husband a worthless scamp.' There were also, I found, two children—a boy and girl—one thirteen, the other eleven years old. As we were speaking, the unfortunate wife entered the room with a message to the landlady, and I obtained a momentary glimpse of her face. It still retained a singular beauty of expression, and her sweet, patient voice was melody itself. She vanished immediately on finding a stranger in the room; and while I was hesitating what course to pursue, a knock came to the door. 'That is Randall,' said the landlady. I rose, met a stoutish, ill-clad man in the passage, and said I should be glad if he would accompany me for a few minutes to a tavern close by. He looked curiously in my face, smiled with an expression of low cunning, and intimated that he was ready to go with me.

As soon as we were seated in a private room I said: 'I am deputed by a gentleman who takes an interest in the welfare of your family to offer you, on certain conditions, pecuniary assistance.'

'You are Lewson's clerk,' rejoined Amory with cool effrontery. 'I have seen you in Friday Street when I have been deliberating whether or not to call on him, for old acquaintance' sake.'

'I *am* Mr Lewson's clerk,' I answered, with a good deal of asperity; 'and you can no doubt guess at the motive which prompts that gentleman's offer.'

'Of course, I can,' replied the fellow, still unabashed.

'Well, then, we may at once come to an understanding. I will take a furnished house for you, which happens just now to be vacant at Hammersmith. You can have possession a few hours hence. The rent I will pay, and in addition, you shall receive five pounds every Monday morning.' The fellow made a gesture of unbounded astonishment. 'But, remember, this is contingent on the strict observance of the conditions I am about to state.'

'Name them!' he eagerly exclaimed. 'I agree beforehand.'

'They are these: first, that Mrs Amory never hears from whom these gifts proceed. You can say, if you like, that a legacy has suddenly fallen to you.'

'Ay, ay, that will be easily managed. What else?'

'That Mrs Amory and her children are maintained in comfort and respectability, and especially that you treat her, both in word and act, with unvarying kindness and respect.'

'Certainly, certainly,' stammered the fellow, and I think a slight blush stole over his harsh features.

He was of course prodigal of promises, and ultimately everything was arranged; and by five o'clock in the evening the family had taken possession of their new abode. I found Mr Lewson, on my return, busily engaged with two gentlemen in important business transactions, and it struck me more forcibly than ever how difficult it was to believe that beneath that worldly surface, that rigid, stony exterior, there dwelt a heart, tender as valiant, and disposition capable of the most generous, the most romantic sacrifices. I intimated, in a few brief words, that everything was settled, and took my leave for the night. The next day, all that I had done was formally approved of, and it was tacitly agreed that the subject should be no longer mentioned between us.

I kept a strict watch, as I had promised, upon Amory, and soon found that his old propensity of gaming was again acquiring the ascendency over him. I warned him of the consequences, as I indirectly did his wife, who believed me to be the landlord of the house he occupied. He promised to be cautious, and thus matters went on for something more than four months, when, on entering the counting-house late one afternoon, after an absence of five or six hours, Mr Lewson, who seemed a good deal disturbed, said: 'A distressing circumstance has occurred, Meredith. A man of the name of Randall has forged my acceptance to a bill of exchange for three hundred pounds.'

'Indeed; well, who is this Randall?'

'Amory!'

The painful emotion which agitated us both may be imagined. 'See the bill-broker who presented the acceptance this morning, and settle it,' said Mr Lewson, placing a cheque for the amount before me. 'We will talk hereafter upon the best course to pursue for the future.'

I took the cheque, hastened away, and just as I turned into Cheapside, met Mrs Amory hurrying distractedly along towards the warehouse. Her husband had been taken into custody, and in his terror had confessed everything. 'I know all now,' murmured the weeping, terrified woman, 'and I must see Rob—— Mr Lewson immediately.'

I told her of my present errand. 'Bless him,' she exclaimed with choking utterance, as she took my arm to retrace her steps. 'May the Almighty bless and reward him.'

The holder of the bill very joyfully accepted the cheque in exchange for the acceptance; and as Amory or Randall had not been taken before a magistrate, there was little difficulty in effecting his release upon the withdrawal of the charge by the bill-broker, who very politely apologised for the *mistake*, and the trouble he had given the police. Mrs Amory had gone home by my advice in a cab, in order to afford me an opportunity of conferring privately and seriously with her husband, who, after being bound over by the superintendent to appear as a matter of form before the sitting alderman on the following day, the charge having of course been entered on the police sheet, was liberated. I was waiting for him in the street; this Amory knew, and either in order to annoy me, or because he really disliked seeing me after what had taken place, he turned doggedly into the first dram-shop he reached, and no message, no entreaty could get him out of it, until he thought I was gone, and then he, emerged in a very advanced stage of intoxication. I followed him for some time unperceived; but just as he had reached the bottom of Snow Hill, he caught sight of me, and hastened to cross over to the other side of the street. He was about half-way across, when the rapid approach of a furiously driven cab startled him; he made a dart forward to avoid it, slipped, fell, and in another instant the horse and wheels had passed over him. He was taken up and carried to Bartholomew's Hospital. Amputation of both his legs eventually became necessary, and the unfortunate man died under the operation, tended to the last by the patient ministry of his gentle wife.

The agitation Mrs Amory had undergone brought on a violent fever, and for several days her life was thought in danger. I got my sister, a sensible woman, and a widow, to whom I thoroughly explained how matters stood, to attend her in her illness, and afterwards remain with her as companion and housekeeper. It was more than two months after Amory's death before my sister reported positive progress. 'Mrs Amory,' she said, 'is merely afraid of indulging in the happiness which, for all that, is simmering at her heart—afraid to hope for, or appear to think about, what I see plainly enough alone occupies her thoughts. In short,' added my shrewd relative, 'Mrs Amory is a woman, and I must say a very amiable and still beautiful one. You would scarcely know her: she looks at least ten years younger than she did.' My sister's account of Mrs Amory's state of mind precisely described that of Mr Lewson; but I thought it better not to hurry matters, and accordingly another month slipped by, and we were still in the same undecided state, when my sister, who could keep silence no longer, had a long interview with Mr Lewson, the result of which was, that half an hour afterwards, that gentleman, scrupulously attired, was on his way to Hammersmith. Of what passed there, I cannot speak with precision; I only know that Mr Lewson purchased a large house at Bayswater, furnished it magnificently, and that upon the 4th of March last, close upon the expiration of the year of widowhood, Robert Lewson, bachelor, and Mary Amory, widow, were united in holy wedlock at Hammersmith Church. A happier household than theirs does not, I think, exist in Christendom. The children, fortunately, wonderfully resemble their mother both in person and disposition, and Mr Lewson consequently loves them as if they were his own. He himself appears to be growing younger every day he lives, and Mrs Lewson but the other day told my sister, who is a great favourite of hers, that the period of her first unhappy marriage is gradually passing from her memory, that her youth and the dreams of her youth seem renewed, and the past to lie behind her like a mournful and already half-forgotten dream.

THE LAST OF THE CASTLES.

For beings of whose existence the past forms an important portion, the 'last' of everything possesses a melancholy interest. The poetry of sadness belongs to that which shall have no successor; from the last of the barons to the last of the summer roses, genius has cast its melancholy and tenderest grace on 'the last,' and ever speaks to one of the most universal sympathies of our nature.

During a recent visit to that land of castles, North Wales, we have participated in this sentiment while gazing on Chirk, the last of the Welsh castles; not the last of *ruined* castles (*they* are nearly as rife in Wales as they were in Sultan Mahmoud's dominions), but a real and very perfect castle of the early Norman days, in good repair, and as unchanged as when Roger Mortimer paced its ramparts, or the cavaliers held it for their king; not one of your modern 'castles,' as little like a feudal one as Lord Fizspoon, its owner perhaps is like Warwick the Kingmaker, but a building which in pure good faith carries into the 'one-brick thick' nineteenth century the perfect image of an ancient home.

Leaving Wrexham, and passing through the lovely valley of the Dee, one enters on a succession of green lanes, overshadowed by elms, as old and rural-looking as befits the place to which they lead. The park-gates are modern, but may be excused as the work of native genius; they were wrought by the village blacksmith and his daughter, and resemble the iron-work of Quentin Matsys, to be seen at Windsor. Here begins that wild and wooded land—a park of old as well as now—which bears in each gnarled oak, and mighty beech, and ancient elm, the date of a former age. By degrees, as the road winds, the old towers, gray, massive, and weather-stained, open upon us, but scarcely after a picturesque manner. Chirk is too entire, too perfect. It stands, as all of its type did, on a steep, bare acclivity. No oak-trunk or brush-wood to afford shelter to an advancing foeman. It is quadrangular, with enormously thick and low-looking towers, covered with ivy; and it lacks the high 'keep' of many ruins. The substitute for this is a small watch-tower. In short, Chirk bears no resemblance to the kingly ruins of Conway, or the warlike remains of Porchester: it is simply a baron's house, such as existed when might was right, and every man held life and liberty as he best could, behind the shelter of stone-walls.

We enter Chirk by an iron postern, flanked and protected by two strong turrets, and find ourselves in the castle-yard. It is oblong, and of great size, the castle entirely surrounding it. It contains the well; and from one corner of it a flight of rude stone-steps leads up to the watch-tower and ramparts, round which we walked with great interest. The pathway, running amongst and beside the sloping roofs, is very narrow; it seems impossible to mount a cannon there; but we were told they did achieve the feat in the time of the Commonwealth, when, by one of the whimsical chances of the times, Sir Thomas Myddelton, with the Puritan army, besieged his own house, and could not take it! Afterwards, returning to his allegiance, he held it for Charles II. himself.

From these ramparts the neighbouring people looked down, some short time back, on the 'coming of age' of the heir of Chirk; and it was one of the prettiest scenes I ever beheld. The ramparts, which run round and overlook the court, as well as the external wall, were perfectly crowded with gay and interested faces. Deputations with addresses; country folks in their bright striped petticoats and high hats; the rifle uniforms of the Denbigh militia, the brilliant dress of the ladies, conspired to heighten the picture; while upon the steps of the south postern stood the father and mother of the heir with their son—the beautiful mother in her black velvet and point-lace, and her face of triumphant motherly pride, being a very fair substitute for the stately ancient *châtelaines*, and the young heir no bad representative of the youthful aspirant of ancient chivalry. The scene must have quite equalled any one of those over which time has cast the glamour of his veil.

By the postern on which this group stood, we enter the castle itself. The hall scarcely answers to one's notion of what a baron's hall would be. It is a low, heavy-looking square apartment, lighted by the soft colours of a painted window; it contains a good deal of carved wood furniture, some pieces of ancient armour, heraldic paintings, and—on a very handsome, massive sort of chiffonnier—a few curiosities from other lands brought home by some travelled heir of Chirk, to enrich the home of his fathers. Leaving this hall, we ascend a staircase, wide, but rather steep, which conducts us into a gallery running round the centre hall below. On the walls of this staircase, numbers of old engravings are hung, the subjects taken chiefly from the events of Henry VIII.'s reign. Their curious want of perspective and general duality of subject testifies to their antiquity. The gallery, also, is hung with quaint queer pictures. Here, Europa crowns with flowers the horns of the pretended bull; there, a monster of fabulous ugliness is scaring away some unfortunates from a fountain in a temple, by the sheer power of its look. From a door in this gallery we enter on the state-apartments of the castle, and find ourselves in a dining-room meet for any age. It is oak wainscotted, and consequently rather sombre; but the windows, which open into the court-yard, are of very good size, and the sideboard, of carved oak, is of exquisite beauty. From this dining-room one enters a magnificent saloon, lighted by three large mullioned windows, also looking into the unromantic safety of the court below. The ceiling and decorating of this room were done under the direction of Pugin, we were told, and are of rare beauty. Medallions in plastic-work make the ceiling gay with bright and graceful colouring, and the pretty green paper is partially covered and wholly enlivened with paintings of price. A pretty emblazoned card gave us the key to the pictured history of the walls. The pictures are many of them portraits. One especially interested us, being a likeness of that Countess of Warwick who was the wife of Addison. It is a proud, and not very pleasant face, but lovely enough to justify the great essayist in forgetting the risk of marrying above one's degree. We could not help thinking how little the haughty lady would have believed the soothsayer who might have told her that it would be for her *husband's sake* only that the eye of the stranger would linger on her portrait.

The furniture and ornaments of this room are all of the age of Francis I., and the chamber itself is sixty feet long by thirty broad.

From it we passed into a drawing-room thirty feet square, furnished and decorated in the style of the same period. A door on the right hand conducted us into a gallery, which finishes this range of apartments. It is worth more than a cursory visit. Very broad, and a hundred feet long, there is something in its stately and massive gloom which makes it the link, as it were, between the present—in the shape of the gorgeous drawing-rooms—and the past, in that of the south-west wing, the watch-tower, and battlements. A billiard-table, and an ancient spinet, stuffed leopards, and cabinets of the seventeenth century, continue the mingling of times in this singular spot. One of these cabinets is well deserving of notice. It was given by Charles II. to that same Sir Thomas Myddelton who is so absurdly found besieging his own dwelling, but who, repenting of his disloyalty, returned, as we have seen, to his allegiance. This cabinet is a marvel of taste and skill. The silver ornaments of the exterior are very chaste, but when the doors are open we find the interior far superior to it. It contains a series of doors—opening into a small shrine—every one of which, as well as every part of the cabinet, is painted exquisitely, the subjects being all taken from Scripture—the story of Abraham, the miracles of our Lord, &c. On each side of the recess or shrine there are a number of drawers—doubtless some secret ones also—all painted in the same exquisite manner.

A door, invisible to stranger eyes, opens in the wall on the right-hand side of the gallery; passing through it, and descending a few steps, we find ourselves in a suite of bedrooms, which are literally 'guest-chambers,' of great antiquity as to furniture. Small and dark, and with those old thin-posted bedsteads which give one such dismal notions of want, from their attenuated appearance, we were not much charmed with the sleeping-apartments of other days, though one ought to be very dear to all of 'cavalier' tendencies, for in it slept King Charles of blessed memory! The ceiling is ornamented with painted and plaster ciphers of C. R.; and by the chimney hang framed the proclamations, &c., of the time. The bed is the very one on which the royal and care-oppressed head rested, and the sanctity of misfortune hallows it even now.

A flight of stairs leads from these rooms to the domestic apartments of the castle, which are far superior, we think, to the state-rooms. An elegant anteroom leads into the most charming of small drawing-rooms. The fluted arches of the Gothic roof are brilliantly painted, and give the idea of Alhambra splendour; and the thousand little elegant appliances of female life add an air of comfort to its elegance. There is a charming dining-room attached to this suite of rooms, lighter, and at the same time more cosy-looking than the first we saw. The dressing-room of the owner of the castle (Colonel Myddelton Biddulph) is formed in the *depth* of the wall, and is sixteen feet square!

The south-west wing has been left in entire antiquity, and presents a strong contrast to the luxury and comfort we have described. It contains small rooms, with loopholes for windows, doors moving on huge hinges, with heavy bolts, underground dungeons, &c., &c. In every tower is a narrow winding staircase; and thus, by a thousand significant mementoes, is the age of might united with the age of civilisation, at Chirk.

The expense attendant on the 'keeping up' this feudal house is immense. We were told that thirty-six female servants scarcely suffice for the household work; that the yearly repairs consume L.1000 of timber annually; in short, that the gloomy magnificence of Chirk costs four times as much as a modern dwelling-place of the best possible description to support.

It is not, therefore, an enviable possession; but we are glad that good and high family feeling has preserved it to us as it is; and not unpleased, perhaps, to be assured of the great step made by the human family in comfort, beauty, and kindly affections, by the silent testimony of the last of the Welsh castles.

BILL FUSTIAN ON THE TEMPERANCE OF THE UPPER CLASSES.

We are occasionally told that intemperance is, in our age, peculiarly the vice of the working-classes—and goodness knows we are many of us bad enough; but how can it with any face be alleged that devotion to the inspiring cup has ceased to characterise the middle or upper classes? Granted they do not now go and get drunk in taverns, as they once used to do; but if they still have jollities of a high kind, and many of them, at home, what matters the desertion of the bar-room and coffee-house?

Now, I do not go out of my way to inspect or censure the habits of those who are called my betters. I altogether repudiate the idea of prying into such matters, either in the way of retaliation—though some might think that all fair—or as a means of indulging a pharisaic spirit. I only wish to ascertain whether this common remark as to the temperance of the middle and upper classes is entitled to entire faith, as a trait of the state of society in our age. And I take for this purpose evidence supplied voluntarily by the parties themselves as to their habits.

When a gentleman dies, we generally get a notion of what sort of man he was from the effects he leaves to be turned into cash by his representatives. When he leaves a huge library, and nothing else particular, we naturally infer that he was a lover of books and a man of intelligence and learning. When he leaves a fine gallery of pictures and sculptures, we conceive him to have been a man of taste. When his chief effects turn out to be horses and dogs, we believe he must have been a sporting character. If he leaves a large stock of wine, there is an inference from the fact, analogous to the preceding deductions, and apparently as reasonable.

It will not be denied that sales of the stock of wines belonging to deceased gentlemen are about as common as sales of their libraries. Every now and then, the newspapers advertise the approaching sale of such and such a gentleman's cellar, containing rare and valuable wines, and in large quantity; and when it is past, we are sure to have paragraphs giving an account of the flocking of connoisseurs to the auction-room, the interest excited by this and that particular old port or delicious sherry, and the unheard-of prices at which some of the lots were sold. I naturally infer from this, that for gentlemen to keep large stocks of wine for their own and friends' use is the rule amongst those who can afford the indulgence; consequently, that abstemious habits are not, as alleged, a peculiar virtue of this portion of the community. Another inference may, I think, be reasonably made. The advertisements and catalogues of such sales never fail to announce the name of the deceased proprietor. It becomes evident that there is nothing presumably unusual or discreditable in being possessed of a large stock of the elements of conviviality. Were it otherwise, the friends of the deceased would of course conceal the name, or cause the wine to be disposed of in some less public way.

The newspapers of a certain city lately announced several sales of large private stocks of wine, with a full blazonment of the name of the proprietor in each case. In one instance, there were five hundred dozen —a prodigious quantity truly. All valuable wine, too; the aggregate sum received for it amounted to about two thousand five hundred pounds. In another instance, there were eleven hundred dozen, comprising wines described as 'of the highest class, fully matured and in splendid condition, extraordinary care having been taken in the selection.'

Eleven hundred dozen of wine required as a stock by one gentleman! One might doubt the fact, for eleven hundred dozen is thirteen thousand two hundred bottles, or a bottle for each working-day for forty-two years; but the auctioneer is careful to inform us that the wines in this catalogue had, without exception, belonged to the cellar of the gentleman specified. The point is further verified by extracts from a cellar-book which the proprietor kept, and in which he had entered all desirable information respecting each kind of wine he possessed. Thus he states of one kind of port, of which there were fifty-five dozen and a half: 'A pipe selected by Mr A. Cockburn from the hill-country as the finest port from the best grapes, and of the *old true character of port;* bottled in 1846.' Of certain sherry, he speaks thus: 'Very rich and singularly soft wine; five years in wood in Calcutta; brought home in 1827; kept by me in wood till 1829, when it was bottled.' Of another kind, of which he had forty-five dozen and a half, we get an elaborate character: 'The proceeds of a butt and hogshead of the finest sherry Cockburn could select, which were sent out to Madras in 1828, and kept there for me by Arbuthnot's house, for five years in wood, remaining till February 1835. Fifty-four dozens were all that remained after the evaporation, when the butt was filled up by Arbuthnot. This probably is the most extraordinary sherry, and the finest to be met with anywhere. None ever received the same treatment—one year of Madras being equal to two of Calcutta. Mr Robert Cockburn shewed some of it to Cadiz merchants in London, who said they had never seen wine of such flavour.' And so on of almost every parcel, amounting to a hundred and thirty in all. The historic accuracy is most remarkable—Hockeimer of vintage 1756: 'From Barensfeld of Hanau, with whom Mr Skene lived before the Revolution; got in 1823.' 'Claret, Château Margaux; vintage 1844—*The best I could select after repeated trials:* bottled January 1848.' What nice speciality, too, as to antecedents—'*one year of Madras being equal to two of Calcutta.*' The trouble taken by the owner about all these wines, marks eminently in how important a light gentlemen hold such things—first selected in Spain, then sent to the East Indies to be mellowed, care taken of it there for years—filled up—bottled—then sent home: what elaboration—what forethought and provision! Well, we do take a bouse at the Cat and Bagpipes now and then of a Saturday night; but not one of us, I dare say, ever gave a thought for a minute beforehand as to what we were to drink.

To give further verification to the wines as those of the proprietor named, we find specifications of the particular bins of the cellar in which they were stored; and the highest number of these bins is No. 101. Think of a hundred and one capacious receptacles containing wine, as an appendage to a gentleman's dwelling! And think of the amount of money thus expended. I have learned through the newspapers that the port sold at five, seven, and nine pounds per dozen—a small parcel so high as ten guineas. The forty-five and a half dozen of East India sherry sold at twelve guineas a dozen; and the rest at nine, five, and four pounds, or thereabouts. Claret sold at six and eight guineas a dozen. One parcel of Johannisberg brought the astounding price of L.17, 6s. 6d. per dozen! *We* are often lamented over by philanthropic souls on account of the large proportion of our wages that we are said to spend in ale and whisky; but it is evident that we have good examples for what we do in that respect among our so-called betters. Why, this one gentleman could not have laid out less than five thousand pounds upon that prodigious bacchanalian battery of his, not to speak of the value of the time and trouble he bestowed upon it.

The general conclusion at which I arrive is, that the upper classes, while continually maundering over *our* doings in this way, only differ from us in the appearances they preserve. No one sees them now-a-days in taverns, as *we* are seen; but they meet in each other's houses, at grand dinners, during and after which they consume no inconsiderable amount of wine. It is rather odd, however, that when a poor man indulges in any degree, there is such a howling at him, and such a wailing over him; whereas, when a rich man is found to have been never so much of a wine-worshipper, there is nowhere a remark to be heard upon the subject. During the late celebrations of the birthday of Burns, there were good souls who expressed themselves loudly in sorrow over his social indulgences; but what could be the errors in this respect of a poor gauger with seventy pounds a year? What was the 'peck o' maut' among the 'three merry boys,' compared with the thirteen thousand bottles of wine which, as we see, formed the store of one rich man?

MR RIVERS TOPPER IN EXPLANATION.

My name is, I grieve to think, sufficiently known to the British public. A very large body of my fellow-countrymen are accustomed to execrate me in no measured terms. One considerable section of the community, remarkable for its wealth and influence, has gone so far as to have me burned in effigy, and perhaps there are some of a poorer order, who, feeling that they have been deprived by me, even of their bread, would willingly repeat the process, with the slight, yet to me important alteration, of inserting my real person instead of the mock one. Scientific associations have stigmatised me in language that would be only applicable to the inventor and introducer into this country of the small-pox or other deadly epidemic, and have afterwards kindly forwarded to me a copy of their proceedings; while, I regret to say, even the wearers of my own cloth have not hesitated from their pulpits to make me the subject of special diatribe.

The voice of conscience—which is unfortunately 'still small' as ever—is indeed the only one that has not rained upon me the cruelest reproaches, the vilest accusations. If there be, however, any eyes which can so far bear with me as to read what I have here to urge in my defence, I do not despair of eliciting a tear from some of them; for it will be shewn that the mischief which I have committed was done unwittingly, and simply caused by the too great cultivation of my mind.

Two years ago, the sun did not shine upon a more inoffensive being than myself. I think I may truly assert that, with the exception of a peculiar insect which affected the moss-roses in my garden, I had not a single enemy in the world. It was the only serpent in my Eden, and even him I treated tenderly, and suffocated anæsthetically with the best tobacco-smoke. My Moss-roses (*Centifolia muscosa*) were my peculiar joy; next to those, perhaps, I prided myself upon my Early Dwarf tulips (*suaveolens*); and third in the scale of my affections floated upon my little fishpond the *Nymphæa lotus* or Water-lily of the Nile. The pond was not much bigger than a foot-bath, but it accommodated its sole inhabitant—for there were no fish in it—and yet had room to spare. I was a clergyman, but without a cure, so that not even the dissenters had any cause for bitterness against me. I hope I did my duty to the poor; I know that not a flower drooped its head, but that I was by its side at once with a little stick for it to lean upon, and a strip of matting to tie round its delicate neck. My greatest cause of quarrel with any of my fellow-creatures at that time, was some chickens that would come over my wall from the neighbouring farmer's to dine upon nasturtiums and piccatees.

I live at Sticton-in-the-Marsh, in the centre of the fen-country, which to me is not without its beauties. I do not speak of its picturesque advantages, which are few, but of its various and prolific varieties of water-plant, which are many.

> 'The plains are grassy, wild, and bare,
> Wide, wild, and open to the air,
> Which has built up everywhere
> An under-roof of doleful gray;
>
> * * * *
>
> But the tangled water-courses sleep,
> Shut over with purple, and green, and yellow,
>
> * * * *
>
> And the creeping mosses, and clambering weeds,
>
> * * * *
>
> And the silvery marish flowers that throng
> The desolate creeks and pools among,'

are of a very peculiar and interesting description.

To botany, in fact, and especially to the study of water-plants, was my highly cultivated mind directed, and there was no reason whatever why it should not be so. I had three hundred pounds a year of my own, and 'neither chick nor child'—yes, I had chicks, by the by, as I before mentioned, but they were only occasional incumbrances; and why should I not spend some of my surplus revenues in dried specimens of *Conferva, Hydroctyon, Mougeotia, Tyndaridea, Oscill*—but I forbear, from a sense of the (unjust) popular objections to these scientific epithets. I had a whole room fitted up for the reception of these things, where the different classes rescued from the watery deep were exhibited, as in some botanical *Morgue*. All day long, in the summer-time, I was out by the side of the great canal (which supplied, by a large iron pipe, my fishpond with water), or upon the banks of the Sticton, which emptied itself after many miles into a still larger and more navigable river. The bargemen recognised me, with my little dredging apparatus and waterproof bag for containing the specimens, while they were still a great distance off, upon the horizon of 'the level waste, the rounded gray;' and as they came up, hailed me, with a somewhat irreverent jocularity, as Parson Tadpole. But what did that matter? They were not disobliging, and often tore away for me with their punt-poles vast specimens of the *Gigantherium absurdum*, which I could not by my unassisted exertions have obtained.

Pardon me, if I seem to dwell upon these reminiscences of bygone joys with a somewhat tedious persistence; I dread to withdraw my mind from the pleasant past, and to approach the narration of the misery of the last two years, the misfortune of a life, the curse of an entire district; nay, as some persons aver, the future ruin of perhaps every inland port in the United Kingdom. All which mischief has arisen, it will be seen, from the indulgence of an over-cultivated mind.

It was in the early summer of 1856 that Professor Redschid Fellah of Alexandria concluded his somewhat acrimonious discussion with me upon the nature of Egyptian water-plants, and acknowledged himself, in a Coptic letter (which my ignorance of that language prevented me from discovering was ironical), completely vanquished.

'By this steamer,' he concluded, 'I send you a small specimen of the *Growforevva Aquatilis*, at present unknown in England; may its shadow never be less, and may you yourself live a thousand years to watch its growth, and receive the thanks of a grateful nation for its introduction.' Who would have thought that, under the pretence of a scientific gift, the wily oriental was planning the destruction of my beloved country?

In due course of time, the *Growforevva Aquatilis* arrived at Sticton-in-the-Marsh, in a small air-tight vessel with the seal of Redschid Fellah impressed upon its lid. The instant that this was opened, there leaped out, like a Jack from his box, a mass of stem and foliage that half-filled the little lobby of my house; not from one root, but from a thousand which had affixed themselves in a wondrous manner to the sides of the case, wheresoever any portion of the plant had touched them. It had, I knew, a most rapid and prolific growth; but that within the limits of its air-tight prison it should have acquired such gigantic dimensions, far exceeded my expectations. A brother savant (who lived in a pretty villa by the canal sides, mainly, as I believe, for the convenience of studying the *Algæ*) was with me when the precious present was unpacked, and declared that it seemed to grow before his very eyes; and this statement, which I set down at the time to enthusiasm, I have since been led, been dragged to believe was only too true. He was about to leave home for a few days on pressing business for London, but would, I think, have delayed his departure to contemplate more particularly this rare and exquisite specimen of Egyptian water-plant, had I not prevented him, by my ridicule, from indulging a cultivated taste to so absurd a degree.

'It will be time enough three days hence,' said I, 'for you to see how he gets on in my fishpond with his fellow-countrywoman, the Lily of the Nile.'

Alas, how lightly will we weak mortals converse when ruin is threatening! Nay, how pleased are we with the glow of the volcano before the wide-sweeping red-hot lava rolls down and sweeps over us all!

Within five-and-thirty minutes of my remark, the Lily of the Nile lay a mangled corpse upon the pond's surface; the constrictor folds of the *Growforevva Aquatilis* had done their work, and the new arrival had hidden every inch of water, and was striving, as it seemed to me, in an eastern and hyperbolic manner, to grow over the entire lawn.

It had fixed its roots in every portion of the circular bank; its stems were like the handle of a carter's whip, rather than, as when it had arrived, like the lash of it; and as for getting it back again into the little tin box, the Jin in the *Arabian Nights* might as easily have been compressed into his little spirit-bottle by the mere brute force of the Fisherman. I went to bed in a fervour of delight, but not unmixed with dread. I began to think that I had rather too much of a good thing, and might spare some cuttings for my friends. I did not pass a good night, by any means, but it was the blessed repose of an infant compared to anything I have experienced since. When my servant brought me the hot water next morning, he told me that one of my friends the bargees had called an hour before with a new specimen of water-plant which he thought I would like to purchase, and that he would bring it again later in the day. But that information, which a few hours before would have filled me with pleasure, no longer excited me; for what was even the rarest of the English *genera* to the *Growforevva Aquatilis*, now in my proud possession, and a sprig of which I had made up my mind to present to the Royal Botanical Society!

There was a letter upon the breakfast-table, in the handwriting of my friend the savant, and superscribed 'immediate,' which, as I had parted with him so lately, I was exceedingly surprised to see. I tore it open with eagerness, but without alarm. I put it down, when read, with the cold numbness of despair at the core of my inmost heart. It ran thus:

'DEAR TOPPER—I advise you to *look out* for that precious specimen of yours, lest it should bring you into grief. [My friend was rather a vulgar man, and must have picked up some of his coarser expressions, I think, from our mutual allies, the bargees.] It's a beggar to grow, let me tell you, and if you are not very careful, may do a tremendous lot of mischief. I was reading about it after I left you, in that scarce work—of which, if you remember, you tried to get a copy and couldn't—and this is what is there said of it: "This plant (the *Growforevva Aquatilis*) is perhaps the greatest scourge in the whole vegetable kingdom; its rapidity of growth, its tremendous generative powers, and its tenacity of existence, combine, wherever it has taken root, to make it an almost ineradicable curse. Lower Egypt has been greatly devastated by it. The river Nile itself is only kept free for navigation by the multitude of its alligators, of which this plant is—providentially—the favourite food." So you look out that it don't get into the Sticton, my Rivers Topper, or else you will become a *River Stopper* indeed. [This man, it will be seen, was a rude as well as a vulgar man.] And by the by, be very particular that it don't get up that iron pipe of yours, and so into the canal'——

When I had read thus far, there was a knock at the door, and the servant, as was usual when any such person came, introduced the bargee who had called in the early morning. He bore in his hand a considerable bunch of green stuff, about the size of a misletoe-bough, an unmistakable specimen, which filled me with horror, of the abominable *Growforevva Aquatilis*.

'Me and my mate,' said the fellow, pulling his forelock, 'found this here on the canal this morning, sir; and there seems to be a good deal more where it came from'——

'Well, to be sure,' interrupted my servant Peter, who, with the licence of a favoured domestic, had remained in the room, 'it do look main like that ere plant, sir, which you got from Hegypt yesterday.'

'Hold your tongue, sir!' exclaimed I, in as bold a voice as I could compass. 'You are far too officious, sirrah, for your station; and besides, you are a fool. It's the—the—the— *Watumecallum commune*, an English water-plant; and thank you, my man, here's a shilling for you.'

As soon as they had quitted the room, I rushed into the garden and down to the fishpond, with the air and celerity of a determined suicide. If suicide, however, had happened to have been my object, it would have been quite unattainable: the execrable stranger had sucked up almost all the water. I tore away the clotted leaves and interlacing stems, which grew about the mouth of the iron pipe, and bent down hastily over the spot to learn the worst. Alas, the orifice of the pipe was barely distinguishable; scarcely a drop of water could find its way through it, and the whole subterranean channel was in the occupation of that noxious weed. A scintillation of hope still gleamed within my bosom as I ran hastily over a quarter of a mile or so to the canal, with which the other end of the tube was connected. 'Surely, surely,' thought I, 'the *Growforevva Aquatilis* cannot have made its way along this enormous distance in a single night!' I even took with me a gigantic bung, to stuff into the opening of the tube, if the mischief were not already done. Vain and superfluous precaution! The prolific vegetable, like the bean-stalk in the nursery tale, except that it grew horizontally instead of upward, was spreading from the pipe's mouth in all directions, and as luxuriantly as from a cornucopia.

I severed the main trunk of it with my garden-knife; but it had taken root in a thousand places, and was growing all along the bank as far as I could see.

All that remained to me was to put the bung in the mouth of the pipe, to drag backward the quarter of a mile of stem that traversed it, to destroy the parent plant which still polluted my premises, and to protest that I had never had any connection with the *Growforevva Aquatilis* whatever. But, alas! had not Peter seen the specimen from the canal, and expressed his suspicions? and if even I could quiet him by any means—and surely almost any means would have been justifiable—was there not my brother savant, who would by this time have babbled my secret to half London. What irreparable mischief might my scientific fancies have unwittingly led me to commit! What public ruin might have been wrought by this caprice of my cultivated mind! And oh, what a hideous revenge had Professor Redschid Fellah of Alexandria wreaked upon my innocent head for having overcome him in botanical argument!

Seeing, therefore, that concealment was useless, I spared the loathsome vegetable, and shut myself up in my once peaceful home, awaiting events; nor had I to remain long in suspense. The *Sticton-in-the-Marsh Gazette* of the next Saturday had an interesting paragraph, headed 'An Anonymous Visitor,' and describing with a hideous accuracy the curious and novel water-plant which the present spring (!) had produced in the canal as well as in the river Sticton. 'It bears no resemblance to any of the marsh-plants with which we are hitherto acquainted, and the best botanical authorities who have been consulted are quite in the dark upon the subject.' The next week the *Gazette* inserted a furious rejoinder from my friend the savant, who begged to observe that 'the best botanical authorities' were in no doubt at all about the matter; that the plant was the *Growforevva Aquatilis*, a well-known Egyptian river-weed; and that this country was indebted to that celebrated naturalist, the Rev. R. Topper, for its recent introduction. 'To give your readers,' he concluded, 'an idea of its astounding vigour and fecundity, the canal in front of my house is now entirely overspread by it, as with a carpet; and I only trust that when the sun begins to shine down upon it in summer heat, that no wide-spread *malaria* may be the result—as generally happens at that season in its native climate.'

All this time my friends and neighbours carefully avoided the subject—a silence arising, I do not doubt, from motives of delicacy, but which, although I did not like on my part to break it, almost drove me distracted. At last, I took courage to remark in a tone of jocularity to Peter, that the bargees seemed tired of bringing me any more specimens.

'Lor bless you, sir,' responded my unsensitive retainer, 'why, doant ye know what a happened?

That ere plant in our fishpond yonder ha been and stopped it up.'

'Stopped *what* up?' asked I indignantly. 'You must have got it in your head, I think, instead of brain.'

'Well, not quite *that*, sir,' remarked Peter sullenly; 'though they do say it'll get in everywhere in time. But the canal be stopped up at all events; and never a bargee ha been along it these four days.'

'I beg your pardon, Peter,' said I, thoroughly humbled; 'is there any other news regarding the—the (I could not pronounce the hated name)—the Egyptian stranger?'

'Well, sir, there be sure*ly* a great sight of water a spreading over Doddington Plain, as it cost sixty thousand pounds to reclaim from the marshes a year or two ago: the draining-pipes is all stopped up *of course*, sir. And all the water-mills, as you will be likely to have heard, sir, ha stopped work, because as this here plant gets round their wheels, and' ——

'Thank you, Peter,' interrupted I, almost in tears; 'that'll do for the present; you shall tell me something more about it to-morrow.'

Alas, with the morrow there came a lawyer's letter from the proprietors of Doddington Plain.

Another from the Water Millers' Association.

A third from the Canal Company, giving notice of action for damage done to their property, which had brought down their shares to zero.

A fourth from the Commissioners of the Sticton Navigation, charging me with preventing the opening and shutting of their lock-gates, and consequent interruption to the traffic.

And a fifth—which made me angrier than any—from a scheming quack, who pretended that he could make paper out of my 'novel and interesting importation,' and requested to know if he was at liberty to make use of the *Growforevva Aquatilis*, or if it was my private patent:

But why should I dwell longer upon these distressing incidents? These five, out of some five hundred instances, will suffice to give an idea of the light in which I began to be held by the commercial community.

I only stood one action, and that was decided by 'a mere legal accident,' as the judge was good enough to observe, in my favour. If the jury had had anything to do with it, I should have become indebted in the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds (out of a life-annuity of three hundred) to one of the great River Companies, into whose property, some seventy-six miles away, the *Growforevva Aquatilis* had strayed.

I was saved by the simple circumstance that no law had ever been provided to meet my case. The Lord Chief Justice directed a verdict accordingly, and added these additional remarks for my private edification and improvement:

'Rivers Topper, you have been acquitted by a jury of your fellow-countrymen of an act which will yet cause your name to be held in detestation wheresoever there exists a necessity for water-carriage. You may congratulate yourself upon an escape from justice, if you please, but you will carry about with you, I hope, the inner sense of'—— My brain began to reel when his lordship had got thus far, and I only recovered consciousness about a quarter of an hour afterwards, and just in time to hear his concluding sentence: '. . . . and by this terrible example let us learn, that there are no evils produced by ignorance and brutality so gigantic in their effects as may be the mischiefs of an over-cultivated mind.'

Two years have passed since my once untarnished name began to be held in universal abhorrence. I am not callous to a sense of my situation, but I am thankful to say a sort of despairing calm pervades me. When the wind brings ever and anon to my ear the whirring of the wheels from the steam-engines always employed on the neighbouring canal in the fruitless labour of cutting away the hydra-headed weed—an importation of alligators having failed from the circumstance of their having eaten one another on the voyage from their native land to Gibraltar—I feel an occasional spasm of unutterable disgrace; but that is all.

The bitterness of man has done its worst: my back has been deadened to the cat-o'-nine tails of Public Opinion, ever since the Royal Society for the Cultivation of Water-plants caused the name of the *Growforevva Aquatilis* to be erased from their Encyclopædia, and that of the *Topperonia Pestifera* to be substituted in its stead.

VISITS OF THE PLAGUE IN OLD TIMES.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

All have heard of the plague, as a terrible contagious disease which long ago used to visit various districts of our country, and carry off great numbers of the inhabitants. The people of almost every place have their traditions about the sufferings which this malady inflicted, and can shew retired spots where those who died of it were buried, for it was thought improper to inter them in the common church-yards, under an impression that a re-opening of the graves of the victims at any distance of time afterwards would be sure to occasion a new breaking out of the disease. But, though the plague is still a frequent theme of remark at the fireside, so long a time has elapsed since it was actually present amongst us, that very few persons have any clear idea of what it was.

It was simply a very violent kind of fever, expressing itself outwardly in pustules and carbuncles, and attended, as fevers usually are, with a complete prostration of strength. Sometimes, however, the eruption did not appear, and in those cases the fatal result was commonly more sure, as well as more speedy. The disease is still of constant standing in Egypt, and it occurs frequently in most countries around the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. In all those countries, the governments feel it a duty to take precautions by quarantine and otherwise to prevent the plague from being communicated. In England, however, there has been no visit of the pestilence since the year 1665, when it occurred with extreme virulence in London, carrying off 68,000 victims in the course of four months. From Scotland, it has been still longer absent, namely, since the year 1645. There has not been even a threat or alarm amongst the British people on this subject since the year 1720, when the plague got so far westward as Marseille in the south of France, and proved very fatal. We have had here typhus fever and other contagious maladies during the last two centuries, and down to very recent times; but, happily, from this most frightful of all contagions we have long felt quite secure.

It is with a curious and not uncomfortable feeling that, in the midst of safety, we recall the memory of so great an evil. Perhaps the recollection is fitted to produce or encourage a sense of content, since it shews us that, however we may regard the evils that still in the course of providence rest with us, we are exempt from at least one of a very dire character, which used to fall with terrific severity upon our forefathers. And it is not only in being free from the ailment that we are better off than they; but when we learn the public regulations that were taken with the plague long ago, and the treatment afforded to the sick, we find that our ancestors must have suffered much more than we, in the like circumstances, would have to bear.

In Scotland, long ago, whenever it was known that a case of the Pest, as it was called, had occurred in a town, the magistrates issued orders to cause every afflicted person to be carried out to some muir or common in the neighbourhood. The citizens were enjoined to make known any case that occurred in their houses, that the ailing person might be instantly removed, or the house closed up, sick and well together—for such was the regulation: if a man concealed the illness of a wife or child, the punishment assigned to him was instant suspension opposite his own door. Meanwhile, the people of the neighbouring towns drew a guard round the affected town, or closed up their ports against ingress from it, keeping it as far as possible isolated, even though its inhabitants should thus be brought to the borders of starvation. Public attention was everywhere directed rather to the preservation of the untainted than to the recovery of the sick. The poorer class met with exceedingly little regard. People seemed to become detestable to each other. The rich fled to their country-houses, thinking little of what might become of the mass of the wretched whom they left behind.

When the plague occurred in Edinburgh in the year 1568, the afflicted were sent out to live in huts hastily erected on Bruntsfield Links. As the golfer now pursues his ball over that pleasant green, he may yet trace the slight mounds formed by the ruins of the lines of low hovels which, three centuries ago, gave shelter to these unfortunate people. They were allowed to be visited here by their friends after eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and any one going earlier was liable to be punished with death. Meanwhile, their houses in town were subjected to being 'clengit' by proper officers. Caldrons were also erected on the Links, to boil and purify the clothes of the sick. All of these regulations were under the care of two citizens selected for the purpose, and called *Bailies of the Muir;* for each of whom, as for the cleansers and bearers of the dead, a gown of gray was made, with a white St Andrew's cross before and behind, to distinguish them from other people. Another arrangement for the disposal of the dead was, 'that there be made twa close biers, with four feet, coloured over with black, and [ane] white cross with ane bell to be hung upon the side of the said bier, whilk sall mak warning to the people.' Many of the dead were interred in the church-yard of St Roque's near by—a burial-ground devoted to the purpose, St Roque being the especial patron saint of people ill with, or victims to, the plague. The place is now occupied by a pretty villa, the proprietor of which had much of the ground turned over a few years ago when rebuilding his house. Many of the remains found were in such a confused arrangement as shewed that little ceremony had been used in shovelling the bodies into the ground.

It is stated that the mortality of Edinburgh on this occasion, during about four months, was two thousand five hundred, which could not be much less than a tenth of the whole population. While the plague lasted, nearly all public business was at a stand, there being no sittings of the Court of Justiciary in particular from August till March. There is just one relieving circumstance connected with this visitation. There was a young man of good connections in Edinburgh, named George Bannatyne, who had a great taste for poetry. Having withdrawn from the plague-stricken city, with a great number of poems in manuscript, the production of Dunbar, Douglas, Henryson, and other versifiers of the preceding hundred years, he employed himself while the pestilence lasted in transcribing these into a fair volume, which he probably designed to be thenceforward his favourite book. This volume has survived, and is now in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, while other copies of most of the writings of the early Scottish poets have perished. It is reasonable, therefore, to infer that we should have lost much of that valuable portion of our national literature, had not George Bannatyne been enabled by the forced leisure which the plague gave him, to devote a winter to its transcription. It is believed that his retreat while writing the volume was the manor-house of Newtyle, near Meigle—a neat little old-fashioned dwelling still inhabited, and kept in good order.

Speaking of a retirement from places afflicted with the plague, I may remark that it was not always an effectual measure, for sometimes the fugitive would carry the seeds of the disease along with him, and we may be sure would be a very unpopular visitor, and meet with little sympathy from the people among whom he came. It is very natural in such matters to seize upon exceptional cases, and make a rule out of them; and we may therefore not be surprised to find King James remarking, in one of his works, that 'the pest always smites the sickarest [that is, surest] such as flies it furthest and apprehends deepliest the perils thereof.' And it is perhaps equally natural for those who have taken this view of the matter when the plague was not at hand, to act on a different principle when the danger approached in all its dread reality. King James was hunting at Ruthven or Huntingtower in September 1584, when 'word came that there were five or six houses in Perth affected with the plague; whereupon his majesty *departed the same night* with a very small train to Tullibardine, and next day to Stirling, leaving his whole household servants enclosed in the place of Ruthven, with express command to them not to follow, nor remove forth of the same, until they saw what became of them upon the suspicion.' *

Fireside tradition and song have consecrated an instance of flight from the pestilence which was destined to be in a striking degree vain. It was probably at the last remarkable visit of the plague in 1645 that two young ladies of the vale of Almond in Perthshire, joined in building a bower on Lednoch Braes, in which they might spend some time in retirement, in the hope of thus escaping the disease by which so many were falling around them. As the ballad says:

> Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
> They were twa bonny lasses,
> They biggit a bower on yon burn brae,
> And theekit it ower wi' rashes.

You can still have the spot pointed out to you, not far from Lyndoch House, for alas! the fate of the two maidens has given their history an indelible tragic interest in the hearts of the people thereabouts. The story is, that a lover of one of them was accustomed to come from Perth to see his mistress, bringing with him various articles which they required in their simple solitude. With him came the infection. They both were smitten and died, and their par[illegible] buried them together in the Dronoch Haugh near [illegible] Almond. Major Barry of Lednoch, more than a [illegible] tury afterwards, cleared the spot, enclosed it wi[illegible] wall, planted it with flowering shrubs, and rai[illegible] stone with the names of Bessie Bell and Mary G[illegible]

We find in the works of old medical writers [illegible] the pest was generally regarded as arising from a corrupted state of the air. It was thought to be connected with cloudy seasons, and in a minor degree with the effluvia of stagnant water and putrefying organic substances. Having thus been engendered, it naturally spread from person to person, and from place to place, often communicated by a mere piece of clothing; but it was admitted to be more ready to seize upon a poor than a rich, upon a weakly than a robust person. It was believed in many instances to be brought from foreign countries in merchants' vessels. When a ship approached our harbours with a case of pest newly broken out in it, there was no immediate help to be had from the shore, no escape for those as yet uninfected. The vessel was warned off, or, at the utmost, the inmates were permitted to land on some uninhabited isle, such as Inchkeith or Inchcolm, in the Firth of Forth, there to stay while any sickness remained amongst them; no matter for the hardships to which they might thus be subjected, or the hopelessness of cure. We hear of a ship coming from Danzig to Leith in September 1580, with seven Edinburgh merchants on board, besides upwards of thirty other people. All were doubtless full of pleasant anticipations of the homes they were approaching, when the pest broke out amongst them. With some difficulty, they were allowed to land on Inchcolm; but before the disease had exhausted itself, the greater part of these poor people had perished.

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* Moysie's *Memoirs.*

There is great reason to believe that, while the communication of pestilence from abroad might be accidental, the spread of the evil over the country depended much on the conditions in which the people lived. The want of cleanliness in their houses and persons, the keeping of putrescent matters near their dwellings, and a poor style of diet, were all standing evils of old times, favourable to the diffusion of any kind of pestilential fever. When there was any unusual failure of the fruits of the earth, so as to throw the people upon the use of roots, grass, or other substances unsuitable for human food, then the plague was sure, if it occurred at all, to take a great hold, and to have many victims. For example, in the year 1315, the crops having failed, there was a severe dearth, and next year came a pestilence attended by such mortality that, in the words of an old writer, 'the people living were scant so many in number as were able to bury the dead.' To quote an original and very curious *Chronicle of Scotland* under the year 1439, 'there was in Scotland ane great dearth, for the boll of wheat was 40s., and the boll of ait-meal 30s.; and verily the dearth was sae great, that there died a passing number of people for hunger. And also the *land-ill* or *wame-ill* was so violent, that there died mae that year than ever there died owther in pestilence or in ony other sickness in Scotland, and it was called the *Pestilence but Mercy*, for there took it nane that ever recovered; but they died within twenty-four hours.' The plague which occurred in Edinburgh in 1568, already alluded to, was preceded by 'an exceeding dearth of corns,' and an extensive mortality of cattle, the consequence of a great drought in the preceding year. Another remarkably sore visit of the pestilence, which occurred in the year 1624, was heralded by a famine of great severity. We learn that the harvest of 1621 was miserably deficient, insomuch that there was a scarcity even of seed-corn for the ensuing year. On this occasion, says a contemporary chronicler, 'every one was careful to ease himself of such persons as he might spare, and to live as retiredly as possibly he might. Pitiful was the lamentation, not only of vaiging [that is, wandering] beggars, but also of honest persons.' The famine continued in 1623, and to such a degree that people would come into the towns, lie down in the streets, and die. It was in the next year that the severe pest above mentioned came upon the people. So universal was the desolation it occasioned, that the Court of Session was unable to keep its usual sittings. It must be admitted that there were instances of pest unpreceded by famine, and of famines unfollowed by pest; but the general bearing of the facts is certainly such as to countenance the modern theory of Dr Alison, as to a connection between destitution and pestilential fevers. It may be remembered that this respected professor brought forward a pamphlet in 1839, to prove that the severe typhus fevers which were then of such frequent occurrence, arose in a great measure from the extreme poverty in which certain portions of the inhabitants of large towns were accustomed to live. And his reasonings on this subject had an effect in bringing about the liberalisation of the poor-laws which soon after took place. It is certainly remarkable that since that time—partly, no doubt, through the good effects of free trade—there has been comparatively little destitution, and scarcely any typhus fever.

There was another condition apparently very favourable to the spread of pestilence, and this was a depressed state of the public mind. Modern physicians in general admit that cheerfulness and stout-heartedness have a great effect in beating off the assaults of disease. That portion of King James's remark which adverts to a deep apprehension of the danger of the plague, was just. Such an apprehension is really calculated to make the attack of the disease more likely. We all remember how general the observation was in the times of cholera morbus, that to be much afraid of it commonly acted as a predisposing cause. Now, it is remarkable of several of the most noted occurrences of plague in Scotland, that they happened at times when, owing to political troubles and disasters, the public mind was much harassed and depressed. The pest of 1568 came immediately after the battle of Langside, when Queen Mary was dethroned, and when there could not but be considerable anxiety about the future. Another of the great pests took place in the summer of 1585, when the people were in great apprehension lest their favourite religious institutions should suffer under the profligate government of the king's favourite, the Earl of Arran. On that occasion Edinburgh was so desolated, that Mr James Melville and his friends passed through it from the Watergate to the West Port at mid-day, and in all the way—a mile—did not see three persons; so that, says he, 'I miskenned Edinburgh, and almost forgot that I had ever seen sic a town.' * At the beginning of November, an army of sound Protestants, including a number of Annandale men, made their way to the king at Stirling, banished the Earl of Arran, and put public affairs on a good footing. The pestilence, as we are assured by a contemporary historian, † then ceased, 'not by degrees or piece-meal, but in an instant, as it were; so that never any after that hour was known to have been infected, nor any of such as were infected before, to have died.' He remarks that the lane in Stirling through which the army came, was full of sick, and yet none of the army was infected. Nay, the Annandale men took to their natural vocation of pillaging in the pest-lodges, even donning the clothes of the sick, and yet they remained free. The historian denounces those who would not believe that this was a special interference of God in behalf of those who had the soundest views of Protestantism; but, with all deference to his well-meaning enthusiasm, we may surmise that the exhilaration of mind attending this *coup d'état* had a great share in banishing the disease, and saving the army from catching the infection.

We see a still more remarkable support to this conclusion in the circumstances attending the last great visit of the pest to Scotland in 1644–45. Newcastle at that time stood a siege of many months by the Scottish army, and, according to a Scotsman's account, there was such scarcity of victuals among the inhabitants, that it could not have held out ten days longer unless they had devoured each other. Tynemouth was also besieged and taken. In this desolated district, the pest very naturally broke out, and the Scottish soldiers, returning to their own country, brought the malady along with them. It spread over all the southern portion of the kingdom, and was in such force at Edinburgh in the summer of 1645, that the victorious army of Montrose was prevented by it from taking possession of the city. Now, let us here mark the conditions of our unfortunate country. It had had a dearth in the winter of 1642–43. Throughout the latter part of 1644, and the early part of 1645, Montrose had swept round and round the skirts of the Highlands, cutting armies of militia in pieces, and ravaging every district in which the people refused to rise for the king. There had been civil troubles for six years, with a ceaseless high-strained anxiety regarding the national religion. To give this an assured permanence, and put down popery and prelacy in England, the Scots had sent a large army across the border, about the welfare of which they were extremely solicitous. Contemporary writers reveal to us incessant harassments from the levies of troops, frequent free quarterings and plunderings, a severe excise for the regular support of the army—joined to all this, almost unintermitting preachings, prayings, fastings, and *thanksgivings*, inferring something like a total suppression of all the ordinary sunshine of life. If we consider all these circumstances, we may well believe that the community was in an unusually depressed state at this time, and when we hear that there was a frightful invasion of the plague, spreading from Kelso to Edinburgh, from Edinburgh to Glasgow and Perth, and lingering two or three years in the country, even after it had cut off great multitudes, we can have little hesitation in believing that the malady had found a ground only too well prepared for its reception.

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* James Melville's *Diary*.

† David Hume of Godscroft.

The traditionary feeling of the people of Scotland regarding the plague is a sufficient proof of the extreme severity of the sufferings which it inflicted. It is desirable, nevertheless, that we should know what it was, and how it was felt, from authentic evidence. We have already seen, in part, what steps were taken by the public authorities, when the malady broke out in any place, or when its arrival from foreign countries was apprehended. It still remains to give a few further traits of the affliction and of the public arrangements regarding it.

We learn from the works of Ambrose Paré, the eminent French surgeon of the time of our Elizabeth, that the cure and prevention of the plague engaged a full share of medical attention in that age. He tells us that there was a great plague in France in 1565, and it had been treated very generally by depletion of the system; but, travelling to Bayonne afterwards with the king, he had an opportunity of inquiring into the success of this practice at many places, and he everywhere found that the patients so treated by blood-letting and drastic medicine, had waxed weaker and weaker until they died, whereas a great number of those who had been supplied with cordial antidotes, taking them inwardly and applying them outwardly, recovered their health. Removal to good air and spiced cordials may be said to constitute the sum of Paré's treatment for plague; and we find that Dr Burgess, an eminent English physician, afterwards prescribed an antidote composed wholly of wine, sugar, and spices, a half-spoonful morning and evening when in health, and a whole spoonful when affected. In regard to virulent carbuncles, the last and worst form of the disease, Paré used medicines calculated to open the pores of the skin, with a view to transfusing the peccant humour; but he informs us, that many patients, almost mad with terror of approaching death, would sometimes cut or burn out these tumours with their own hands, in the hope of thereby saving their lives.

THE OLD CATHEDRAL BELL.

The old cathedral bell,
In its lofty dusty tower,
For ages has its solemn knell
Proclaimed the passing hour,
With its steady song,
'Ding dong,'
Echoing the vaulted aisles along.

On massive oaken beams
Doth the mighty monster swing,
But each a bending osier seems
When the bell begins to ring,
And its echoing song,
'Ding dong,'
Shakes the old tower that has held it long.

'Twas many a year ago
The ancient bell was young,
And with solemn rite and priestly show
In its lonely dwelling hung,
Since then its song,
'Ding dong,'
Hath monarchs' deaths and victories sung.

War, has its voice proclaimed,
And discord's fiery brand,
And battle, rout, and carnage named,
Wide-spreading o'er the land,
When its bellowing song,
'Ding dong,'
Has blanched the weak, and nerved the strong.

Now tolled in midnight deep,
Now rung in noontide ray,
Ushering a king to death's long sleep,
A new-born prince to day,
Still clear and strong,
'Ding dong,'
Unchanged its voice through centuries long.

The old cathedral bell,
It laughs at pomp and power;
Oft has it struck their passing knell—
Vain creatures of an hour—
Obtained by wrong,
'Ding dong,'
All full of care, nor lasting long!

The beggar in the dust,
It raises by its voice:
'In God thy Maker trust;
Rejoice in Him, rejoice—
Be firm and strong,
"Ding dong,"
Trial is short, and victory long!'

A lesson loud and clear,
It teaches all its days:
'Do steadily thy duty here,
And send to Heaven thy praise!
So shall thy song,
Like my "Ding dong,"
At last be loud, and clear, and long!'

G. H. P.

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'HOW D'YE DO?'

THE social principle in man is strong and ineradicable. He may be proud, domineering, or all that is bad; but to confine him with Diogenes in a tub, or a Platonic lover in some brilliant satellite, were an intolerable punishment. Solitary confinement is, and ever must be, the keenest corrective trial. A man may rave about his independence, and desire a whole universe to himself, hollow to resound his massive tread, mirrored to reflect his noble form; but therein he stifles the outgrowing inclinations of his own heart, and does not guess how sensibly he would feel the want of the commonest expressions and salutations of everyday-life. Prometheus, chained on his crag, amid the eternal snows, and gnawed by the vulture, and Simon Stylites on his lonely column, are apt types of such a solitary friendless creature. Individual isolation is unnatural and inhuman. Nor is the self-centered existence of nations one whit more possible, or in accordance with the nature of things. No matter how uncivilised a people may be, or how remote in distance or history; in their warm welcoming of strangers impelled to their shores by curiosity or commerce, this sociality, this dormant consciousness of a primeval oneness, seems to burst forth. Our own highly favoured and social land, in an age when steam and electricity have done their best to promote universal brotherhood, has been making a mighty clamour, lest Earth should be the only inhabited orb in the universe. Our social bias would even people the moon and stars with beings like ourselves.

Growing naturally out of this irrepressible instinct, are all those relations and virtues which adorn our common life, and promote good feeling amongst men. This sociality will express itself outwardly, either in actions or common speech. Man will recognise his fellows, and even where there are no positive ties, there will be an interchange of ceremonies and good-wishes. These gratulations are as extended as the human race itself; and the rude savages who have never before seen the white man's face, are as ready to make their friendly obeisance, as are mutual friends endeared by a long attachment, or those whom a fine bright morning makes unusually genial.

There is something peculiarly interesting in these common forms of salutation, current in different parts of the world. They give us admirable evidence of the geniality and good qualities of mankind, individually and nationally, and are the rude poetry of life, which is refined and beautified in the poet's song. In these forms of friendliness and recognition, all the great features of races seem, in geological phrase, to crop out; and while they are interesting in themselves, they serve to strengthen previous convictions, and indicate much genuine kindness where it was least to be expected.

The term 'salutation' is equally applicable to those well-wishes which are current in common life, as to those acts and gestures which are their substitutes or accompaniments. The word itself, which expresses either, exists in very similar forms in several languages. In Latin, from which the others are derived, it is *salutare*, to wish health; in Italian, it is the same word, differently accentuated; in Spanish, it is *saludar;* in French, *saluer;* and in the old English of Chaucer and his predecessors, *salue* and *salew*.

In the kindly wishes and compliments which have become household words and national inheritances amongst men, there is less variety than will be found in the various mute signs of friendly feeling. The common wish, 'Good-morning,' or 'Good-day,' is a contraction of the one used by our pious ancestors, 'God give ye a good day;' and 'Good-bye' is a similar corruption for 'God be wi' ye.' 'Farewell' is another Saxon term employed in parting, synonymous with the Latin terms *Vale* and *Valete*—'May you be in health;' and the French word *Adieu*, now Anglicised, expresses the beautiful sentiment, 'I leave you to God.' In Roman Catholic countries, 'Praised be Jesus Christ,' to which is answered, 'For ever, Amen,' are the usual daily courtesies. The German miners' salute, 'Good-luck to you,' is expressive of their mingled benevolence and superstition. Amongst the eastern nations, there is a flourish about these tokens of friendliness peculiarly characteristic. The Turk confides you to Allah in the most determined and poetic manner, and blesses you from the crown of your head to the sole of your feet, with quotations from their proverbs and wonderful poetry, until you are almost smothered in flowery sentiment. The Koran enjoins them thus: 'When ye are saluted with a salutation, salute the person with a better salutation, or at least return the same; for God taketh an account of all things;' and they invariably manage to outdo the foreigner, however long and ably prepared his sentiment may be. This doubling of the salutation was common also amongst the Jews; the answer to a 'Good-day, my lord,' being generally, 'A good and a long day to my lord.' The Jews, too, anciently enjoined the saluting only of friends, and were careful to avoid strangers. Hence is derived the scriptural expostulation, 'If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?' Their ordinary forms were

—'God be gracious to thee, my son. Be thou blessed of Jehovah! May God be with you!' and, to their kings, 'Sir, be your life prospered.'

The Arab, like the Turk, retains the old 'Peace be with thee,' so often rolled out as *Pax vobiscum* from unctuous priestly lips; and the reply is, 'With you be peace.' He addresses the stranger with 'Welcome! What do you wish?'—and a 'God reward you' suffices to remunerate for any attentions at their hospitable hands. The scriptural injunction, 'Salute no man by the way,' is thought by some to indicate this saluting as a hinderance to the disciples' journeying. The African traveller, Hameman, says the better educated the Arab, the more persevering will he be in questions as to your welfare. He once saw a well-dressed Fezzan youth accost an Arab of Augila. The youth detained the old man for some time, and, not content with this, ran by his horse's side for half a mile, ejaculating: 'How dost thou fare? Well, how art thou thyself? Praised be God, thou art arrived in peace! How dost thou do?' and other similar civilities. The Chinese *Yung fo*, 'Happiness is painted upon thy countenance,' is a common salute amongst the men; whilst the women, only allowed to salute their own sex, say *Van fo*, 'May all happiness be with you.' Towards the ladies of Siam, no matter how old or ugly, all the terms of delight and preciousness heaven and earth afford are indiscriminately employed; and the prefix 'young' is, no doubt, very pleasing when coupled with 'heaven, diamond, angel, and flower.' In Paraguay, in South America, when a person returns after a lengthy absence, he enters his home and seats himself; the females walk around him for a time in silence, and then burst forth into all sorts of mournful salutations, and pour upon his ears all the disagreeable incidents that have marked his absence, which he gravely repeats after them; and, this over, they lapse into more joyous tones, and an entertainment concludes the event. '*Wacosh*,' '*hoec*,' and '*lawlee*,' words expressive of friendly welcome, were bawled out with stentorian lungs by the natives when Captain Cook was exploring the north-west coast of America.

The oldest form of salutation in which there is outward action and signs is that of embracing and kissing various parts of the body. When Esau met his brother Jacob, the latter bowed seven times to the ground, and Esau ran to meet him, and fell upon his neck and embraced him. Joab, as we find in the Bible, also took Amasa by the beard to kiss him; and this practice is still current amongst the Arabs and Moors when both parties are friends and of equal rank; and other eastern tribes also take one another by the chin in giving a hearty salute. The kissing of the shoulder or neck was also common amongst both equals and inferiors; but the kissing of the feet, although not unusual with the Jews, is generally deemed an expression of servility, inasmuch as the saluting person generally threw himself on the ground before the object of his real or simulated affection. Pope Constantine I. had his foot kissed by the emperor Justinian II. when he entered Constantinople in 710, and Pope Valentine I., about 827, was the first who required it as an established form of respect. Poles, Bohemians, and Russians are all profuse in these salutes, on the ground, of the knees, hands, and garments of individuals. To kiss the forehead of a Russian lady, is the height of good-breeding; but in Italy and Germany, if against the lady's wish, it is punishable by law. Gentlemen in Germany and France often embrace and kiss each other openly, and many an exiled son of Erin, tramping along our highways, thus welcomes his friend with an amount of affection which is not the least interesting trait in their character. Kissing the hands is a mark of respect that was very much observed in ancient times. Priam kissed the hand of Achilles in the *Iliad* of Homer, and with both Greek and Jew such salutation was used towards the higher functionaries in the government. The greatest act of politeness with which an Egyptian can salute a stranger, is to kiss his hand and place it upon his head. The members of an English administration kiss the Queen's hand on their first audience, and when a foreign empress is present at court, her hand is generally extended to the kneeling courtiers who are about to kiss her garment. The younger members of the nobility, when presented to the Queen, receive from her a kiss upon the cheek.

The bow, in various forms, seems to be next in antiquity and prevalence. Its general form is merely an inclination of the head or body, but in some cases it is accompanied with many strange and remarkable actions. The old Jewish form was to lay the right hand on the bosom and gently incline the body; but when the person recognised was a superior in rank, the obeisance was much lower. The Turk makes the sign of the cross on his breast with his hands, and then bows. The Hindoo salam consists in placing the right hand on the breast with a profound bow, and then touching the ground and his forehead with the same hand. A Chinese mandarin, meeting his superior in rank, stops his sedan, and bows reverentially; and in their reception of visitors, various bowings and bendings of the knee are gone through in the hall, and many florid and titular compliments passed, ere the visitor is allowed to take a seat and open his communication. When two Chinese friends meet, they join their hands on their breasts, or above their heads, and inclining somewhat, exclaim: '*Tsin tsin*'—a complimentary expression something like 'Glad to see you.' If a long period has intervened between their last meeting, they repeatedly fall on their knees, and bend forwards, asking questions, and uttering extravagant gratulations. The Cingalese salute their superiors by bowing the body, and at the same time extending both hands with the palms upwards. In Borneo, the salam is in general use, but they have also a custom of raising both hands above the forehead; and should the person saluted be a prince, they bow themselves to the ground, and retire backwards on their hands and knees. The salute of the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands is even still more curious and complicated. They bend the whole body forward, place their hands upon their cheeks, elevate one leg, and bend the knee. The Siamese makes an ungallant bow by throwing himself on the ground before his master or superior. The latter then sends one of his attendants to see if the inferior has eaten anything of a disagreeable odour, or is otherwise unfit for audience. If such be the case, he is unceremoniously kicked by his superior, and makes his exit much more hastily than he came in; but otherwise, he is lifted up by the attendants, and opens his business. The Egyptian salutation consists in the extension of the hands, or pressure of them against the breast, and an ordinary declination. The bow is the polite form of salutation with both the French and ourselves, although undeniably more cultivated, and better executed, by our gallant neighbours. Yet our ancestors were firm and constant inculcators of the graces of deportment. Any one who will take the trouble to dig amongst the charters of the endowed grammar-schools that are scattered up and down the country, will find that one of the special purposes of their founders was, the 'teaching of good manners and behaviour;' and in towns where the old routine is unaltered, the well-dressed stranger will meet with bows and courtesies, given with true rank-and-file precision.

The shaking of hands seems always to have been an act of good-fellowship wherever it has been current.

With what people it first came into extensive practice is unknown, although its use amongst the early converts to Christianity, in conjunction with the 'holy kiss,' would indicate its employment in place of the older form of embracing. Pythagoras, the founder of the great intellectual school at Crotona, held that friendship was imperishable, and that it therefore behoved no man indiscriminately to conjoin right hands, and thus give the highest pledge of fidelity and friendship to unworthy persons. Ritson, the old English ballad-antiquary, has a verse in one of his collections, very emphatic, respecting it as a true test of feeling; for they were unquestionably hearty hand-shakers in olden times:

For the hand of the heart is the index, declaring
  If well or if ill, how its master will stand;
I heed not the tongue, of its friendship the swearing,
  I judge of a friend by the shake of his hand.

In most civilised countries, the shaking of the hand is the established form of friendly greeting, and it is almost unnecessary to add that Englishmen are eminent for the vigour and cordiality of their grasp. The Arabians of the desert shake hands with friends as many as six or eight times. Many negro races prefer confining their attentions to the fingers alone. Seizing the hand, they pull away at the fingers until the joints begin to crack. The people of Lower Guinea also seize the fingers in an odd manner, cracking them, and calling out: 'Thy servant, thy servant.' In the upper provinces of Guinea, they mutually embrace, and join the fore or index finger of the right hands, until they crack, when bending forward they say: 'Good-day, good-day;' or if the persons be of the upper rank, they exclaim: 'Peace, peace.' The Moors, also, are fond of shaking the right hand.

A variety of other forms of salutation are incapable of classification. The Japanese, in meeting his superior, doffs his sandals, introduces his right hand into his left sleeve, and lets his wrists fall gently upon his knees, when with a rocking, shuffling gait, he quietly passes his superior, jerking out in lugubrious tones the while: 'Augh, augh! don't hurt me, don't hurt me!' A stranger in Marocco has his presence of mind seriously shaken out of him by a Moorish horseman riding down upon him in a furious manner, suddenly checking his horse in front of him, and firing a pistol over his head. The Egyptians, when in their divans, mutually take off each other's slippers, and place them by their sides. The negroes of Sierra Leone bend their right elbows until the hand touches the mouth, the right thumbs and forefingers are then placed together, and slowly withdrawn. The Laplanders press their noses together, and the Tahitian observes the same ceremony, afterwards rubbing the other's hand on his own nose and mouth. Two bands of North American Indians meeting, they throw themselves on the ground before they come near enough to converse, and the two eldest of each party advance with their budget of news. An awful sighing then takes place, ending in a perfect yell; each sex approaches in different groups, and a distribution of tobacco-pipes amongst the men ends the ceremony. In South America, they are unusually pert and laconic. Two greeting, one says 'Thou?' and the other says 'Yes,' and they pass on. The Cingalese women clap their hands, lifting them up to their foreheads. Other customs, equally curious and amusing, are fast disappearing before the intercourse with more civilised nations, which is constantly following upon the extension of commerce; and more refined modes of friendly recognition are replacing those rude and grotesque salutations, which, while they indicate the same common feelings, can scarcely be said to shew the same amount of culture and intelligence. The spread of knowledge and a more extended intercourse are immediately perceptible in the manners of the outward man; and in the constant attrition of social life he acquires a finish and grace which, if it exhibits less fervour, is still not wanting in sincerity or manliness.

THE WILD HUNTSMAN IN FRANCE.

France, too, has its Wild Huntsman, and, in truth, one who is considerably older than either of his German colleagues. It may easily be supposed that the German barons Von Hackelberg and Von Rodenburg are but posthumous sons of the French chasseur, or, to speak more plainly, that the German legend is of French origin. It has become incorporated into German life, like many other French legends—those of the beautiful Magellone, Melusine, and others, to wit—and it still flourishes on German soil, long after it has been all but forgotten in France, a country which changes even its legends, as soon as possible.

The French legend of the Wild Huntsman is connected with a historical person, who was born about the close of the ninth century, one Thibault-le-Tricheur, called also Le Vieux (the Old), of the house of Champagne, Count de Tours, of Blois, and other extensive feudal domains. The sins that have procured for him the appellation of Chasseur Noir, and doomed him to an everlasting nightly hunt, are not specified, but they do not seem to have been ecclesiastical offences, as in the German instances. The clergy must have been ungrateful, indeed, if they took any part in his condemnation, for 'Thibald the Rogue' built them many a cloister, and made large offerings to the church. It seems that the people themselves, of their own accord, ranked him among the evil spirits, and with good right. Thibald was the prototype of the great baron of the middle ages, and as such was the first on French soil who, availing himself of the ruin of the Carlovingian dynasty, declared himself independent, and the hereditary possessor of his fee; and founded the first of those great baronies, every one of which soon became more powerful than the kingdom of France proper, under the early Capets. It was he who took the field against his feudal lord, Louis-d'Outremer, and made him prisoner. His hundred-yeared life, which procured him the cognomen of the Old, he spent in fighting, robbing, hunting, and in taking and breaking oaths. He was cruel, coarse, cunning, greedy, brave, superstitious, and godless. The peasantry on his immense domain he treated with more cruelty than he did his hounds. An old verse thus characterises him:

A homme ne à femme ne porta amitié
De franc ne de chétif n'eut merci, ne pitié
Ne douta à faire mal œuvre ou péché.

As a penalty for his misdeeds, he is doomed everlastingly to carry on, in the character of the Wild Huntsman, the sport he had loved too dearly, with the idea, probably, that he must at last get tired of it, and the thing become a punishment.

In former times, this hunt was common through all the interior of France; but at the present day it is confined to Sologne, and the wild woods round the castle of Chambord. The particulars of this chase we are not able to give, inasmuch as it is invisible; but it is heard rioting among the summits of trees, by the sound of horns, the huntsman's cry, the barking of the hounds, the crack of the whip, the neighing of the horses, the groans of the stricken deer, and accompanied by the whistling and roaring of the wind. Equally ignorant are we as to whether Thibald the Rogue has his face in the nape of his neck, like Baron von Hackelberg, or carries it in front, like ordinary mortals.

In earlier ages, when Chambord and the possessions of Thibald, the castle of Blois, were yet the centre-point of French history, and the residence of the court, the Chasseur Noir was regarded as a prophet of evil. He was heard to howl in the wind when any calamity or great crime was impending. In such cases, he was always particularly noisy in the vicinity of Chambord and Blois. The inhabitants of Sologne, however, can no longer specify the occasions when he appeared as an evil prophet; but it is still remembered that in the year 1750—consequently, at a time when the legend had long been dormant in Chambord—he repeatedly howled round the castle in a very terrible manner; while the events that followed shewed that he didn't make all that fuss about nothing.

Chambord, this fairy castle, this master-piece of the sixteenth century, so rich in art, and, in truth, one of the most majestic buildings that the present millennium has produced, belonged at the period in question to the Marshal Moritz von Sachsen. Louis XV. had presented it to the victor of Fontenoy as a reward for his many successful battles, and for his treachery towards his German fatherland. Moritz, in whose veins ran the blood of Augustus von Sachsen, mingled with that of the adventurers of the house of Königsmark, was addicted to all the pleasures which corrupt princes patronise; and commenced at this time in Chambord a voluptuous style of life that might almost vie with the gaieties there in the time of Francis I. Here was a crowd of noble lords and ladies, just as at the court of Louis XV.; and the forest of Chambord, the dim avenues and labyrinths of the castle, rivalled the gardens and parks of the king. To make the comparison complete, Madame Pompadour came frequently to visit this hero, who inherited the bodily vigour of his father and the beauty of his maternal uncle. A hall of the castle was used as a theatre, in which played the companies of the famous Favard and Mademoisellè Chantilly, whom the marshal loved and the director married. The lavish hospitality of the lord of Chambord was universally appreciated; and the greatest dignitaries crowded around him who was so high in the king's favour through the favour of Madame Pompadour. The Prince de Conti alone was absent.

The Prince was perhaps the only declared enemy of the favourite Marshal von Sachsen. In the battle of Fontenoy, Conti was in dread of the strong columns of the English-Hanoverian army. When they pressed on, he hastened to the king, and implored him to retire and save his valuable life, as the battle was already lost. The king wept, but acted according to the advice of the prince. On riding off the battle-field, he met the Marshal von Sachsen, whom he sorrowfully addressed: 'So we have lost the battle.'

'What villain has told you that?' exclaimed the marshal. 'I tell you, the battle is won.' And the battle was won, and Moritz was loaded with honours and distinctions—so overloaded, indeed, that Conti had no choice but to restrain his feeling of revenge. He had not forgotten, however, that the marshal had called him a villain; and when Moritz von Sachsen had, through his voluptuousness in Chambord, thrust the memory of his victories somewhat into the background, and when it was said that the gigantic constitution of the conqueror of Fontenoy had suffered considerably in consequence of his excessive debaucheries, the Prince de Conti remembered in the liveliest manner that he had been called a villain.

About this time the marshal, with his lords and ladies, resolved on a moonlight ride through the forest of Chambord. The autumn night was exceedingly mild and bright; the company was full of chat, mirth, and laughter. All on a sudden, a roaring noise was heard above the heads of the company, as if some furious hurricane were blowing over them. The sky became dark, and a strange smell of sulphur tainted the atmosphere. The riders reined in their horses; but suddenly a frightful panic seized the whole company, and noble lords and ladies galloped off in every direction, as though pursued by some evil spirit. The marshal alone, in his invincible courage, remained, though somewhat shivering, on the spot. He spurred his horse, but it did not move. The atmosphere around him now became furious as a whirlwind, and through the whirlwind a strange-looking horseman descended to the earth. He wore an old black iron coat-of-mail. From his closed visor stared forth a pair of eyelashes of extraordinary length, and as white as snow; and locks of hair as white spread over his shoulders.

'Moritz von Sachsen,' said the apparition, 'get thee hence out of my territory, and from my wood. Thou hast nothing to do here. If thou art not gone within thirty days, it will be worse for thee.' 'And who art thou?' asked Moritz. 'I am Thibault the Old.' So saying, he sprang into the air and vanished in the whirlwind.

Moritz rode back to the castle, told his adventure, and laughed, and his incredulous court laughed with him. After the tale and the laughter, the marshal considered it cowardice to heed the warning of the Wild Huntsman, and he therefore remained in Chambord, living in pleasure with Madame Favard, Madame Pompadour, and his own riotous hunting companions.

But on a certain night in the end of November 1750, the Wild Huntsman again appeared over the castle and park of Chambord, and this time with a noise and cry, a howling and whistling, such as had never been heard before. The Ukraine horses which the marshal had reared here, and which were grazing in the park, broke through their enclosures, and with dishevelled manes, galloped off in every direction. The two regiments of Lancers, which he always had with him, quitted their stables and barracks, and in their fright were about to throw themselves upon their horses, as though some awful calamity were awaiting them; but they saw only misty spectres, which seemed to be sitting and whistling upon the broad chimneys of the castle, or leaping from one gable to another. Will-o'-the-wisps were running over the large castle-meadows, and owls were shrieking from the roofs. Towards morning, all was peaceful and clear again, but every one in the vicinity knew that something dreadful was about to happen.

Shortly after seven o'clock, a close carriage, that seemed to have come from a distance, drew up at the entrance to the park, and a courier dashed into the courtyard. A *valet de chambre* took from him a letter, and carried it to the marshal, who was still in bed. The marshal read the letter, sprang out of bed, clothed himself in haste, and summoned his adjutant. The arrival of the courier had awakened the curiosity of the servants; they listened, and observed that the marshal and his adjutant descended a secret staircase, crossed over the castle moat, and entered the park. As they entered the first *allée*, two men stepped down from the carriage that was waiting there. After a few minutes, the strangers again entered their carriage, and drove away; the marshal, leaning upon the arm of his adjutant, returned by the same path to the castle, and went back to his bed. The servants were summoned, and it was soon reported through the castle that the marshal was very ill, in consequence of a severe cold he had taken: on the following day he died.

This, therefore, was the event signified by the apparition of the Wild Huntsman. It was his last official appearance: with the fates of France, or of public men, he has henceforth had nothing to do; he has sunk down to a mere spirit of the district, of whom the inhabitants of the villages and farms of Sologne only speak when the storm is raging. Even in the city of Blois itself, on whose eminence Thibault the Rogue built his castle, the Chasseur Noir is known among the learned alone as one of their countrymen. By all the rest of France he is forgotten, and the frequenters of the grand Opera know of his existence, only from *Der Freischütz*, which they take to be pure German.

The legends of France have met with the same fate as its songs. The reminiscences of the middle ages were obliterated as far back as the period of Louis XII. and Francis I., by the glory of new times and by Italian influences. The excitement of the Italian war-stories was superseded by that of the religious war; the memory of this, again, was dimmed by the so-called 'great century' of Louis XIV.; and between these epochs and our own times, the great revolution has fixed a wide, yawning, impassable abyss. Most of the myths and legends which seem to belong to the middle ages, and which at this day flourish more among citizens than in true country-life,. are the artful productions of some fashionable writers of the last century, who arose and became popular *à la Loreley*. Of the real middle-age myths, the last trace will soon vanish from France. That of the Wild Huntsman is fast fading away; and we have introduced it merely for the sake of pointing out something common among very different peoples, an always interesting exercise.

OUR SCREW-NAVY.

John Bull is sorely puzzled; he cannot tell what to make of it. He is roused out of a pleasant slumber, and finds his old cherished opinions most rudely assailed. He has always had faith in the dictum that England holds her position as the first naval power in the world, and he cannot easily give it up. He insists that what Nelson did sixty years ago, we could do again, if necessary. He points to the eagerness of the British sailors to thrash the Russians in the late war, and to the fact that the thrashing was only prevented by the hiding of one fleet behind stone-walls at Cronstadt, and by the sinking of another beneath the entrance of Sebastopol harbour. He *knows* that he has paid enormously in the last few years for 'Naval Estimates;' and he feels that in justice he ought now to possess a large, efficient, and well-equipped fleet. And yet, what is he told? Two or three old admirals, who have given and received hard knocks in their time, inform him that our navy is very incomplete, and that unless we maintain a Channel fleet, we shall rue it some day. Two or three eccentric members of parliament, and other eccentrics who are not in parliament, loudly assert that the French are coming—to land somewhere on our coasts; and draw pictures of thirty thousand French soldiers marching down Cheapside, with money-bags taken from the vaults of the Bank of England. All sorts of frightful things are said, and the lady-boarders at lodging-houses on the south coast meditate with mixed feelings on the possible appearance of ferocious foreigners landing on the beach some fine morning.

In this as in most other matters, what John Bull most wants is a correct statement of the actual condition of affairs: give him this, and he will find a remedy for what is wrong. Unfortunately, official pedantry and routine stand much in the way. The Admiralty and the War-office are famous for non-communicativeness; they profess that it might be dangerous to reveal their secrets to the world; and yet it is pretty certain that foreign governments know what is going on in our arsenals and dockyards. Happily, the subject has now been brought forward in a way that will set all the facts in their proper light. Whether from the open display of French naval power at Cherbourg, or from any other cause, the Admiralty now demand more ships and more seamen; and this demand has been the cause of much publication of valuable documents. About the middle of December, a long and important paper on the state of the British navy was read before the Society of Arts by Mr E. J. Reed, who, before becoming one of the editors of the *Mechanics' Magazine*, was connected with the Royal Dockyard at Portsmouth. In this paper were brought forward many valuable historical and statistical facts relating to the navy, little known before to the general public; and in the discussion which followed, the well-known names of Sir Charles Shaw, Admiral Sartorius, Captain Norton, Mr Nasmyth, Mr Scott Russell, Mr Ditchburn, Captain Fishbourne, and Sir Charles Napier, were found amongst those who supplied comments or suggestions. Two months afterwards, the *Mechanics' Magazine*—which, after thirty-five years of usefulness, has assumed a new form, enlarged dimensions, and increased importance—gave two valuable Admiralty documents, one signed 1850, and another 1856, which had never before seen the light, but which Mr Reed obtained official permission to print. These documents contained the results of a vast number of experiments on screw war-steamers, made during a period of sixteen years, and tabulated with such minuteness as to be invaluable to ship-builders and engine-builders. About this time, Sir Howard Douglas published an important work on steam-warfare; and about this time, too—partly owing to a sort of rivalry between the 'out' and the 'in' Lords of the Admiralty—valuable official returns were ordered and obtained by parliament. It results from all this, that we *now* know what we have got, and how we obtained it, in the form of a steam-navy. The reader will not be sorry to have the facts plainly set before him.

The first point is this—our sailing war-ships are things of the past; they have done their work, and are gone; their glory is wrapped up with the glory of Nelson and Collingwood, Howe and Jervis. We are building no more of them. Some are rotting; some are used as block-ships or hulks; some are being lengthened and converted into screw-steamers. The shape, the dimensions, the moving-power, the armament, all are being changed, insomuch that, for all warlike purposes, we must now regard the steam-navy as *the* navy; and all our future hostilities by sea, whether for attack or defence, must be regulated on a steam-engine basis. The next point to notice is, that our success by sea in the great Napoleon wars was due to the skill of our commanders and the pluck of our men—not to the excellence of our ships. The science of naval architecture was more studied on the continent than in England; insomuch that, class for class, foreign war-ships were better than our own. We overloaded our ships with guns, in proportion to the size, and thus injured their fitness for speed and manœuvring. After the wars with France and America, the Admiralty resolved to enlarge our ships, and to make sundry changes in form and adjustment; and these alterations, during a period of forty years, were carried out by three officers who successively filled the post of surveyor to the navy—Sir Robert Seppings, Sir William Symonds, and Sir Baldwin Walker.

One great experiment has been, to determine whether iron is a good material for ships of war. In 1843, after a few minor experiments, the government began to build iron ships. They built or purchased eighteen such in three years. It has been clearly ascertained that, for merchant-vessels, iron is superior to wood; they may be built lighter and stronger, of greater capacity, of superior speed, of increased durability, and at a less cost both for purchase and repair. But for ships-of-war, there are two fatal objections. One is, that the bottoms of iron ships get rapidly foul; and that a ship-of-war is often engaged for years together in service, far from any facilities for cleaning the hull below water. The other is, that iron hulls are shattered by shot much more injuriously than those of wood; and no contrivance of an elastic lining—of cork, india-rubber, felt, &c.—behind the sheet iron, has sufficed to remove this evil. So important are these defects, that the government in 1850 ceased to build iron war-ships, and none have since been added to our navy.

But now we come to the grand improvement, the great reformer of our century—*Steam*. The readers of *Chambers's Journal* do not require to be informed what were the chief facts connected with the rise and progress of steam-navigation; the story has more than once been told, in different forms. What we have here to do, is to shew how steam got into the royal navy. It was in 1815 that Lord Melville ordered an engine to be built for the sloop-of-war *Congo*, to try the paddle as a means of propulsion. Nothing more was done till 1821, when the small steamer *Monkey* was purchased by the Admiralty. Next, the *Comet* was built; and after this, many other paddle-ships of war—some designed by Sir Robert Seppings, some by shipwrights in the dockyards, some by private persons. Sir William Symonds took up this matter in 1832; he built many paddle war-steamers which were severely criticised both by naval officers and by ship-builders. What would have been the present state of the British navy if the *screw-propeller* had not been invented, it is in vain to conjecture; we have only to deal with facts as we find them. Very early in the history of steam-navigation, the idea occurred to inventors that an Archimedean Screw might be used instead of paddles; but it was not until 1837 that Captain Ericsson practically tested the matter on the Thames. In 1840, Mr Smith introduced a screw-propeller of such improved form that our merchants at once took the matter up, and began to build commercial steamers with screws instead of paddles. Impelled by public opinion, Symonds took up the matter also, on the part of the government.

It was in 1840, then, that the attention of the Admiralty authorities was first pointedly directed to the use of the screw as a proposed substitute for the paddle. The *Archimedes* of only 237 tons, built by a 'Screw-Propeller Company,' which was at that time in existence, made a voyage round Great Britain so steadily and successfully, that the Admiralty commissioned Captain Chappell and Mr Lloyd to try that vessel against the *Widgeon*, a paddle-wheel Dover mail-steamer of less tonnage and draught, but greater steam-power. Six competitive voyages were made in the Channel. It was found that the speed of the *Archimedes* was slightly inferior to that of the *Widgeon*, in smooth water or light winds; but that against a strong wind, the screw beat the paddle. Moreover, if allowance were made for difference of steam-force, it was proved that—horse-power against horse-power—the screw took the lead in fair weather as in foul. The *Archimedes* was a noisy little ship; the shafts and gearing rumbled terribly; but this was an evil quite within the range of engineering skill to remedy. The two judges gave this favourable decision—that a screw-steamer can very easily be used either with steam or sails singly, or with both together; that in carrying a press of sail, a screw-steamer would not be so much affected by inclination of position as a paddle-steamer; that the backing of a screw-steamer is not less easy, and that the steering is more easy, than in a paddle-steamer; and that, in naval warfare, the absence of paddle-boxes would be an immense advantage, in affording room for a broadside battery, and to allow the steamer to come close alongside the enemy for boarding.

This report was so favourable, that the Admiralty ordered the *Rattler* to be built—the first government screw-steamer; the size and power were to be about equal to those of the *Alecto* paddle-steamer, in order that comparisons might more fairly be instituted. Admiralty people travel very slowly when not urged by a 'pressure from without;' and it was not until 1843 that the *Rattler* was ready. Numerous trials were made in that and the two following years. These trials taught many useful facts concerning the most profitable number of turns in the screw, the weight and size of the screw and shaft, &c.; and the *Rattler* stood its ground well against the *Alecto*. The screw-steamer was afterwards put in competition with the *Victoria and Albert*, the *Black Eagle*, and the *Vesuvius* paddle-steamers; and when the gallant but unfortunate Sir John Franklin went to the Arctic Seas in July 1845, the *Rattler* towed the *Erebus* and *Terror* to the Orkneys. Three other small screws were built or bought by the Admiralty about the same time—the *Bee*, *Dwarf*, and *Fairy;* while private companies built the *Great Britain* and other commercial screw-steamers on a magnificent scale.

At length, in the autumn of 1845, the Admiralty determined that *England should have a screw-navy;* and we have now had somewhat more than thirteen years' experience of the mode in which that resolution has been carried out. They insisted on two important conditions—that every part of the machinery for a screw war-steamer should be below the water-line, to be out of the way of shot; and that the screw should be so adjusted as to be shipped and unshipped with readiness, in any weather. All the eminent marine engine-builders of England and Scotland were incited to apply their inventive ingenuity and practical skill to this subject. The Admiralty limited the *compulsory* conditions to a few in number, in order that the engineers might not be shackled in their movements. Our distinguished firms—Mandslay and Field, Miller and Ravenhill, Robert Napier of Glasgow, David Napier of London, Seaward and Capel, Penn of Greenwich, the Rennies, Boulton and Watt—all responded to the appeal, by sending in plans and suggestions. The Admiralty thereupon gave orders for fifteen pair of screw-engines for war-steamers, and four pair for line-of-battle block-ships; taking care that the above-named engineers should all have opportunities of putting their plans in execution. A block-ship is a sturdy clumsy fabric, suited to defend a harbour, but not swift enough to run out and have a sea-fight; the screw, however, gave to these four block-ships such mobile power that they became available at sea. One of the new screws, the *Niger*, was built in the same lines as the *Basilisk* paddle-steamer, to try their merits; and the result was such as to encourage the Admiralty in the new path marked out. It became more and more apparent that, in addition to its other excellences, the screw would be an auxiliary to sailing-ships, and might also be used to facilitate manœuvring or quick movements. Large and small together, there were 45 government screw-steamers ordered between 1840 and 1848, varying from 43 tons (the little *Bee*) to 2334 tons (the *Sanspareil*), from 5 to 780 horse-power, from 63 to 246 feet in length. The engines were of various kinds, according to the plans of the several makers—beam, trunk, vertical, vertical oscillating, horizontal, horizontal trunk, horizontal oscillating, locomotive high-pressure, disc, and rotary. Most of the makers lost money by these undertakings, but they gained experience which became profitable to them and to the country in after-years.

All the 45 screw-steamers above adverted to were subjected to trials, the results of which were scrupulously tabulated; but such has been the 'red-tapism' of the Admiralty, that our men of science and engineers have applied in vain for a publication of those results, until the 19th of February in the present year, when the public, for the first time, were admitted into the knowledge of experiments commenced no less than *nineteen years* ago, and paid for out of the public money.

The screw now reigned triumphant. Between 1848 and 1856 such screw-steamers were ordered to be built as shewed conclusively the estimation in which they were held. An Admiralty paper was drawn up in May 1850, recording the results of all the earlier constructions and trials; and another, in August 1856, brought down the details to the spring of the last-named year. The advance had been prodigious. The second list contained the names of 91 screw-steamers—some of them ships of such size as had never before floated on the bosom of the ocean. There was the *Duke of Wellington*, of 3759 tons and 131 guns; there was the *Marlborough*, of the same number of guns, but greater tonnage; there was the *Royal Albert*, also of 131 guns; there was the *Agamemnon*, of 91 guns, which Admiral Lyons handled during the Crimean war almost as freely as if it had been a pleasure-yacht; there were the *Algiers*, the *Colossus*, the *Conqueror*, the *Exmouth*, the *Hannibal*, the *Orion*, the *Princess Royal*, the *St Jean d'Acre*, the late lamented Captain Sir William Peel's *Shannon*—all magnificent ships, and some of them carrying such armaments as Nelson never dreamed of in his day. These screw war-ships were built at the government dockyards; but the engines came from the factories of the engineers before named, and from those of Scott Russell and one or two others. The greatest speed recorded in the tables is that of the little *Fairy*, a steamer built for other purposes than fighting; but the greatest speed of the majority of the large war screw-steamers does not fall far below 11 knots an hour. The greatest horse-power is not in the largest ship; it is in the *Conqueror*, whose horizontal trunk-engines, made by Penn and Son, have *nominal* 800 and *indicated* 2812 horse-power—a tremendous moving force, which must require a vast consumption of coal.

While this was doing, and in the later years to the present time, France has not been idle. An ordonance of 1846 named 40 as the maximum number of ships-of-the-line; but another in 1851 raised the proposed number to 45—*all with steam-power*. It was further resolved, in 1851, that there should be 20 steam-frigates *à grande vitesse*, 20 more with steam as an auxiliary to sails, 20 steam-transports, 50 steam-corvettes, and 80 steamers of smaller character. Most of these recommendations have been carried out; and France certainly possesses a fine steam-navy. One of her steam-transports, the *Calvados*, launched in 1858, can carry 2500 men, 150 horses, and 1200 tons of stores, at one time. Russia, too, has been making great exertions to collect a steam-navy. Her losses were immense during the war of 1854–5–6; but she has since worked hard, and has now fine fleets of war-steamers in various waters. The United States have made progress, not so much in the number of war-steamers, as in the vast size of the guns forming the armaments.

But let us revert to our subject, the screw-navy of England.

We said in an earlier paragraph that some of the recent publications on this subject were probably due to the unwillingness of this or that minister to bear more than his own proper share of blame (if blame were needed) for delay in bringing up the navy to a due state of completeness. Be this as it may, the late First Lord of the Admiralty, soon after the commencement of the present session of parliament, moved for a return of the number of steam-ships added to the British navy in each year from 1848 to 1858; and for the whole number of steam-ships actually afloat, building, or converting, on the 1st of January 1859. This return has since been produced, and forms one among the recent valuable sources of information on the subject. From this it appears that the steam components of the royal navy were added in the following numbers, in the years named: 4 in 1848; 10 in 1849; 6 in 1850; 6 in 1851; 5 in 1852; 9 in 1853; 49 in 1854; 87 in 1855; 148 in 1856; 15 in 1857; and 15 in 1858—or 354 in all. This certainly does not look like idleness. Of course, the great preponderance in 1854 and the two following years arose out of the Russian war, when steam-gun-boats and gun-vessels were added so rapidly to the navy, to the number of 168. The other return gives us an exact enumeration of all our royal steamers on the first day of the present year, including screws and paddles, and including also those which are now being built, and those sailing-ships which are now being lengthened and converted. The grand total is 463. It will suffice to shew how signally the screw has assumed the leadership; that of this number, 351 are screw-steamers, and only 112 paddles. The list comprises 49 ships of the line, 24 frigates, 9 block-ships, 82 corvettes and sloops, and 4 mortar-ships; the rest being made up of small vessels, gun-vessels, gun-boats, floating-batteries, tenders, dispatch-boats, troop-ships, store-ships, and yachts. No less than 6 of our old line-of-battle sailing-ships are at the present moment being converted into screw-steamers, as well as 6 of the old frigates. Not one ship-of-the-line, block-ship, mortar-ship, gun-vessel, gun-boat, or floating-battery, has paddles, all are screws; the paddle-steamers, with the exception of 9 frigates, built many years ago, mostly take rank among the corvettes, sloops, and tenders. The actual number of line-of-battle screws is 33, there being 10 others building, and 6 converting, to make up the 49. As for our *sailing* ships-of-war, no one now cares what is their number; the strength of our navy is practically measured by steam.

Now, what is the bearing of all this on the rumours and alarms? It may be thus stated—that if England were *suddenly* and without notice attacked by all the power which France could bring, it would cost us some trouble to beat off our assailants, because the British navy, having to defend so many colonies and foreign possessions, is rather scantily stationed on our own coasts. We want a few more ships, and a good many more men, to complete a Channel fleet ready for any exigencies; this done, we may safely resume the calmness of conscious strength, though not the indolence of overweening security. How far any foreign ruler, whether despot or otherwise, is likely to be so reckless as to make an irreconcilable enemy of England by sudden invasion, is a political question which each newspaper reader must decide for himself; but, at any rate, it is certain that England was *not* invaded when weakest—when the flower of her army was away fighting against rebels in India in 1857 and 1858. It is satisfactory to find that our greatest living authority on these subjects, General Sir Howard Douglas, sees no cause for doubt or uneasiness concerning the steady maintenance of British supremacy on the seas. In his new work, *On Naval Warfare with Steam*, he proceeds on this assumption—that whatever foreign nations can do in or with ships, England can do as well, if not better. He admits, and even urges as the main purpose of his writing, that we are now at the commencement of a new era in naval warfare, which will necessarily modify, if not overturn, the present tactics of war on the ocean. Steam is doing this; and we must bend to the mighty powers of steam. But let us, he says, only give fair-play to our own capabilities, and the ball will still remain in our own hands. In this he differs from certain French writers, who have argued that steam-warfare would necessarily bring down the superiority of Britain *relatively* to other countries. They say that when steam supersedes sails, the old skill and daring of the historic 'British tar' would have less scope to shew themselves, and war on the ocean would assume much of that sort of military precision in which continental nations are so well versed. This to some extent may be true; but Sir Howard disputes the conclusion. He asks: 'Is it likely that our nautical science and mechanical skill will remain stationary, while those of other nations go on improving?' He asserts that our seamen, at the present moment, know more about steam-ships and their characteristics, than the seamen of any other nation; that they continue to be diligently trained in all that relates to naval tactics with wind or steam; that our naval officers are prepared to avail themselves of every improvement that science and practice can suggest for the augmentation of their professional attainments; that our sailors have mostly acquired practice in the mercantile marine before entering the royal navy; that they are thus, almost of necessity, more efficient than the seamen in continental navies, who are taken by conscription from towns or fields, with little opportunity for that intermediate training; that the machinery for British steamers is the best that exists; that British enginemen are so much sought and relied on, that they are found in the mercantile navies of all foreign countries; and that no reason can be given why the skill of our seamen and engineers should be stationary, or not keep pace with their increasing opportunities for improvement. So far from ignoring what France, Russia, and America are doing in these matters, Sir Howard draws particular attention to it; but he does so only that we may be on the alert, and avail ourselves of all the scientific improvements of the age. This done, 'it may be safely affirmed,' he says, 'that the advantages which Great Britain has so long enjoyed in her maritime superiority, will rather be increased than lessened under the new and as yet untried power of motion; and it may reasonably be supposed that other nations will continue to follow rather than lead us in the career of nautical warfare.'

VISITS OF THE PLAGUE IN OLD TIMES.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

We do not hear so much of physicians in connection with the plague, as of a set of inferior officials called *Clengers*, whose business it was to establish and execute all the various sanitary regulations held necessary in the case. There were professional clengers in all towns of any consideration; and when the pest declared itself in any village or country place, a clenger was sent to attend to it, at the expense of the place affected. For example, on the pest falling forth in 1606, in the valley of the Dee, cases having occurred in the house of Mr Thomas Burnet, minister of Strathauchan, and in that of John Burnet of Slowy—two places divided by the river, but both on the great line of road leading from the south to the north of Scotland —the country gentlemen met to devise measures for the protection of the public health. One of their expedients was to send to Dundee for two clengers, for whose payment we find them entering into a bond to that burgh to the extent of five hundred merks, a sum equal to nearly twenty-eight pounds sterling. In 1635, the pest having been introduced by a mercantile vessel into the little port of Cramond, on the Firth of Forth, two clengers went thither from Newhaven to take all needful measures with sick and hale. The village was completely secluded; all access and all egress alike forbidden. The people, thrown out of their usual employments, were reduced to starvation, and it was not till their sufferings had lasted three months, that the ban of non-intercourse was removed. On this occasion, a strict order was issued to prevent the landing of people out of ships from Holland, or any intercourse with such vessels as might come into the Firth of Forth. The wife of Thomas Anderson, skipper, having gone on board her husband's vessel, and remained there some time, after which she returned to her house in Leith, an order was given that she should remain within doors. One Francis Vanhoche, of Middleburg, had embarked in a ship bound for Scotland, in order to settle his accounts for lead ore; he had been detained by contrary winds, and then landed at Hull, whence he proceeded to Edinburgh, and took up his quarters with Gilbert Fraser, a merchant-burgess of the city. To the surprise of Francis, he was shut up in the house as a dangerous person, and not liberated till the Laird of Lamington engaged to take him immediately off to Leadhills, where he had business to attend to. As to Cramond, it may be remarked that it is the place where we have the last authentic accounts of the plague occurring in Scotland. In fields within the parish there are four graves of persons who died of the plague, two of them marked with tombstones, on one of which is inscribed the date November 1647.

The pestilence of 1606 was an exceedingly severe one. It spread rapidly over the kingdom, and we are told that neither burgh nor land was free. The towns of Ayr and Stirling were almost desolated. The lord-chancellor, writing to the king in October, says: 'This calamity hinders all meetings of Council, and all public functions for ministration of justice and maintenance of good rule and government, except sic as we tak at starts, with some few, at Edinburgh, or in sic other place for a day, to keep some countenance of order.' The unconforming clergy then imprisoned at Blackness wrote a petition for mercy to the king (August 23), in which they describe the state of the country under its present affliction. They speak of 'the destroying angel hewing down day and night continually, in sic a number in some of our congregations, that the like thereof has not been heard many years before.' They add: 'What is most lamentable, they live and die comfortless under the fearful judgment, filling the heaven and the earth with their sighs, sobs, and cries of their distressed souls, for being deprived not only of all outward comforts (whilk were great also), but also of all inward consolation, through the want of the ordinary means o their peace and life, to wit, the preaching of the Word of our ministry.'

Two years later, Dundee had a visit of the pest exclusively to itself, and was so sorely afflicted, that one of the magistrates being dead, and another ill, and the whole town in a state of disorganisation, it was necessary for the Privy Council to commission three citizens to act as bailies.

It is to be remarked that a visit of the pestilence to a town led to other evils, in consequence of the stoppage it put to business and to work, and its cutting off supplies of articles needful for the support life. We hear of Dumfries, in the beginning of wi 1598, being, through a late visit of the pest, utt prostrated, its markets decayed, and the surviv inhabitants on the borders of starvation. One wo suppose that, in these circumstances, the Chri sympathy of its more fortunate neighbours would h dictated the taking of some measures for its r but nothing of the kind seems to have been offered or expected. Something rather to the contrary is found to have taken place. Two of the burgesses unsuspected of infection were sent out from the distressed town into Galloway, with money to purchase cattle. Coming to the burgh of Wigton, they were civilly received by the magistrates, who let them know that they were welcome to purchase cattle, provided they paid for them, and satisfied the town as to its customs. Thus sanctioned, the Dumfries emissaries went into the country and bought thirty-eight nolt, which they began to drive towards Dumfries, looking for no interruption or impediment. At Monygaff, on the Water of Cree, they were met by a large armed party under the command of Patrick Ahannay, provost of Wigton, and John Edgar and Archibald Tailfer, bailies, who laid violent hands upon them, and carried them and their cattle to Wigton. We do not learn what was the motive of this conduct, but may reasonably surmise it was some claim in the way of custom which the Dumfriessians had failed to satisfy. At Wigton the cattle were detained eight days, getting gradually leaner for want of food, till at last they were 'extreme lean;' and it was not till their owners had paid a hundred merks, that they were allowed to proceed with the beeves to the starving burgh of Dumfries.

The distresses thus collaterally connected with the plague are illustrated by a story resting only on tradition, but which is so universally told in Scotland, that we may well believe it to be in the main true. It is brought forward here in the narrative of a popular work,* as localised at Dundee, but it is assigned to other places:

'In the woodlands, the black nude slug (*Limax ater*) is a huge voracious creature, herbivorous, feeding on tender plants; fruits, as strawberries, apples; and even turnips and mushrooms; appearing morning and evening, or after rain; suffering severely in its concealment in long droughts, and remaining torpid in winter. In the town of Dundee there exists a strange traditionary story of the plague, connected with the conversion, from dire necessity, of the *Arion ater*, or black slug, to a use similar to that which the luxurious Romans are said to have made of the great apple-snail. Two young and blooming maidens lived together at that dread time, like Bessie Bell and Mary Gray, in a remote cottage on the steep (indeed almost perpendicular) ascent of the Bonnetmaker's Hill. Deprived of friends or support by the pestilence that walked at noonday, they still retained their good looks and healthful aspect, even when the famine had succeeded to the plague. The jaundiced eyes of the famine-wasted wretches around them were instantly turned towards the poor girls, who appeared to thrive so well while others were famishing. They were unhesitatingly accused of witchcraft, and had nearly fallen a prey to that terrible charge; for betwixt themselves they had sworn never to tell in words by what means they were supported, ashamed as they felt of the resource to which they had been driven; and resolved, if possible, to escape the anticipated derision of their neighbours on its disclosure. It was only when about to be dragged before their stern inquisitors, that one of the girls, drawing aside the covering of a great barrel which stood in a corner of their domicile, discovered without violating her oath, that the youthful pair had been driven to the desperate necessity of collecting and preserving for food large quantities of these *Limacinæ*, which they ultimately acknowledged to have proved to them generous, and even agreeable sustenance. The explanation sufficed; the young women escaped with their lives, and were even applauded for their prudence.'

Of the dread with which the pest was beheld in those old times, we can now form but a faint idea. We may get some little help in imagining what it was, from an anecdote which lets us into private family life in the seventeenth century. Thomas Stewart, a boy, the son of Sir James Stewart, an eminent Edinburgh citizen, was on intimate terms with James Denham, a merchant-apprentice, the son of Denham of Westshiel, in Lanarkshire. It was in 1645, when the pestilence was hovering about the city, but had not yet strongly declared itself. According to the narrative of a descendant of Stewart, the two youths were one evening at a tavern, where they had received change of some money. Next day, that house was shut up as infected with the plague. This created a strong alarm in Sir James Stewart's house. 'James Denham was sent for, and both were strictly examined as to every circumstance. Thomas had received the money in change, and so frightened were all, that none would touch the pocket in which the money was, but at a distance; and after the pocket was cut out, it was with tongs cast in a fire, and both lads were shut up in a bed-chamber, sequestrate from all company, and had victuals at proper times handed into them. While they thus stood their quarantine, by strength of imagination or power of fancy, some fiery spots broke out on their arms and thighs, and they imagined no less than unavoidable death. They mutually lamented. Thomas had more courage and Christian resignation than his companion. "James," said he, "let us trust in God and in the family prayers, for Jesus' sake, who, as he cures the plague of the heart, can, if we are infected, cure the most noisome disease of the body." They both went to their knees, and joined in most solemn prayer, had much spiritual comfort, and in a fortnight were set at liberty, and the family retired to the country.'

Our forefathers suffered as much from famine as from pestilence; and indeed these two calamities were remarkably connected with each other. We have seen scarcities in our own time; and some elderly people can remember one or two years at the close of the last century, when dearth produced a sharp and very general suffering in the land. But all modern experiences of this calamity appear to have been gentle in comparison with the famines of old times. It was not, of course, that the arrangements of providence were different in those times from what they are now. There does not appear to have been at that time any larger proportion of unfruitful seasons than what we are visited with. But the arrangements of men were much less calculated to save them from the consequences of a failure of the crops. They acted under a total ignorance of the first principles of political economy; and somehow we always find that ignorance leads to mischief. The master-evil of their situation was that they had to depend for the necessaries of life almost wholly upon what they could themselves raise within their own bounds. When their own crops failed, they had no such commercial connections with other countries as might have led to their getting ready supplies from without. They had not, as a rule, either money or goods to send; and though upon occasion they might provide means to purchase supplies, these were not always sure to be had when wanted, other countries not being prepared by any regularity of demand for such a trade. The mere rudeness of things in Scotland did not alone operate here. The government, ignorant even when it meant well, interfered with orders about trade, both in corn and other articles, which had a great effect in impeding a free and mutually beneficial interchange of products. It discouraged the export of our own produce, because that raised prices to the home-consumer; and it discouraged a steady inflow of needful things from abroad, because that, according to their ideas, caused money to be sent out of the country. Consequently, when a scarcity occurred in Scotland, we had little external help to look for. All that the government could do was to issue orders for grain being brought to market, with threats of severe punishment to all who kept it up for higher prices, as well as to all who should presume to buy it up before it came to market, these being called by the generally odious names of *regraters* and *forestallers*. In reality, as is now well understood, these operations of commerce are useful to the community, because they tend to spread consumption equably over the whole time of the scarcity, instead of allowing an over-expenditure at first, with the consequence of making greater scarcity afterwards. But this philosophy was not then understood, and accordingly the holder neither got his fair price, nor was the consumption properly regulated. One fatal result was, that there was the reverse of an encouragement to farmers or landlords to extend the productiveness of their lands, or to keep over any considerable reserve. In fact, by such laws as these, the government simply plundered a particular section of the community for the supposed benefit of the rest; and we all know that where men are not allowed a hope of enjoying the fruits of their own industry, they will be very indifferent about being industrious. The people at large merely prepared future starvation for themselves by interfering, when any scarcity occurred, with the fair course of commerce, and refusing to give the prices which the ratio of supply and demand justified.

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* *Land and Water.* By W. Wallace Fyfe.

Keeping these general observations in view, we need not be surprised that our ancestors suffered much more from famine than modern generations do, and, by natural consequence, were also more severely visited with pestilential disease. A few instances of the two calamities occurring in a connection of time may here be adduced.

In the beginning of 1568, Scotland was visited with 'exceeding dearth of corns, in respect of the penury thereof in the land, and that beforehand a great quantity thereof was transported to other kingdoms.' Exceeding scarcity at the same time prevailed in England, attributed by Holinshed to the singular dryness of the preceding summer, which had parched up the herbage and corn, and led to an extensive mortality among sheep and cattle. This chronicler states, as a remarkable fact, that hay came to be sold by weight, a stone costing fivepence. A pestilence followed, and, as already mentioned, Edinburgh alone lost two thousand five hundred of her inhabitants. A physician, named Gilbert Skeyne, published in Edinburgh, on this occasion, a small tract, from which we learn that he attributed the ailment to putrescent matter, extreme humidity of the air, and the 'great dearth of victual, whereby men are constrained to eat evil and corrupt meats.' He remarks that 'we daily see the puir mair subject to sic calamity than the potent;' but lets us know that the former met with but indifferent consideration from those in better circumstances. 'Every ane,' he says, 'is become detestable to other, and specially the puir in the sight of the rich, as gif they were not equal with them touching their creation.' Indeed, he says he was partly moved to publish his little book, 'seeing the puir in Christ inlaik [that is, perish] without assistance of support in body, all men detestand aspection, speech, or communication with them.'

The winter of 1572–3 was a severe one, owing to the prevalence of north and east winds, and the spring of 1573 was late; it seems to have been a season much like the memorable one of 1854–5. There was consequently a deficient crop in both Scotland and England, and wheat rose to seven shillings a bushel. The common sort of people everywhere suffered severely. The harvest of 1574 was sufficiently good to bring down wheat to its customary price of three shillings a bushel; but the plague nevertheless existed in England this year, and in October it appeared in Edinburgh. We find the kirk appointing a fast in December, 'foreseeing the great apparent plague and scourge of the pest, hinging universally upon the haill realm;' this fast to last for eight days, during which the people were to live upon 'bread and drink with all kind of sobriety.' We do not, however, learn anywhere that the pest, on this occasion, was attended with a great mortality.

The crop of 1586 was a wretched one, and so early as January 1586–7, we find Elizabeth issuing a proclamation in anticipation of a dearth. There was in Scotland in 1587 'a great scant and dearth,' with 'a great death of people from hunger.' On this occasion, we have a very characteristic instance of that kind of interference of government with commerce which used to produce such unfortunate results. In June, King James wrote to his ambassadors in Denmark, regarding a multitude of Scottish ships which had gone to Danzig for grain, designing to carry it to certain foreign ports for a profit: he commands that the *tollender* at Elsinore shall not *custom* these vessels till the skippers come under an obligation to bring their grain to Scotland, 'for relief of the puir and supply of the dearth and scarcity.'

In autumn, the pest made its appearance in Leith, by reason, we are told, of the 'opening up of some old kists.' It entered Edinburgh at the beginning of November, and struck great terror into the country generally. At Perth, there was a fast of eight days; in other places, daily prayers. It lasted in Edinburgh and Leith till Candlemas, but from the silence of our authorities, it does not appear that the mortality was great.

The harvest of 1595 having been destroyed in Scotland by rains, there was a dearth from the latter part of the year. 'There was sic famine in this country,' says the diarist Birrel, 'the like was never heard tell of in any age before, nor never read of since the world was made.' It lasted all through the year 1596. In October and November, wheat and malt were at L.10 a boll. 'Through all the harvest quarter of the year, oatmeal gave aught, nine, and ten pound the boll; and in the south and west parts of the country many died.' James Melville informs us that, partly with a view to averting the calamity of famine, there was a renewal of the Covenant, with fasting and humiliation, in St Andrews presbytery in May; and 'after that exercise there wanted not a remarkable effect.' 'God extraordinarily providit for Scotland victuals out of all other countries in sic store and abundance as was never seen in this land before.' We learn from another source* that, between 1st July and 7th August, sixty-six ships arrived in Leith harbour, laden with grain. The price of grain consequently suffered an abatement; but it rose again, and continued to be at a very high rate till the ensuing summer—oatmeal being at 13s. 4d. a peck in July 1597.

How far England suffered from dearth of victuals on this occasion, I have not learned. In this respect, however, the fate of the two countries was generally alike.

The year 1597 was a notable plague-year in England, 17,890 persons being carried off in London. The pestilence was in the county of Durham in May,† and it soon after appeared in Edinburgh, where a fast with humiliation was held from the 7th of August till the end of harvest, 'at which time the pest ceased.' The disease cannot be said to have been very deadly on this occasion in Scotland. Still, its occurring towards the close of a dearth of about eighteen months, is remarkable. It is also worthy of note that the harvest of 1597 was unusually abundant. Coming in the face of a time of abundance, we can see a natural cause, under Providence, for its being checked.

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* Birrel's *Diary*. † Richardson's *Borderer's Table-book*.

The harvest of 1621 being miserably deficient in Scotland, there followed of course a great famine and even a scarcity of seed-corn for the ensuing year. There was also a deficiency of fuel. A chronicler says: 'Every one was careful to ease himself of such persons as he might spare, and to live as retiredly as possibly he might. Pitiful was the lamentation not only of vaiging [wandering] beggars, but also of honest persons.'* This famine continued in 1623, when it is noted that many poor people died of hunger. Destitute persons came to Edinburgh for succour, and perished for want in the streets.

In the next year, 1624, occurred a pest, so virulent in Edinburgh, that the Court of Session was prevented from sitting down for business at the usual time. There was by this time, however, a general improvement in the condition of the people, as compared with sixty years before; and there was little in the political circumstances of the period to create uneasiness or depression of the public mind. It is therefore not surprising that the mortality was less than on some former occasions. It may be remarked that London was visited by the plague in the ensuing year (1625), with such severity as to cause parliament to be adjourned.

The next fourteen years, being the first fourteen of the reign of Charles I., were not marked by any bad seasons, and it was a time of progress and prosperity in the country generally, little foreboding the unhappy period of civil broil which followed, in consequence of the king's most unfortunate tamperings with our national religious institutions. It is not therefore surprising that the public health seems to have been well sustained during that period. But in 1637 began anxiety and turmoil about ecclesiastical arrangements, and tranquillity was not restored till our country was wholly subjugated by Cromwell in 1651. The winter of 1642–3 was one of dearth, and the scarcity of food increased during the ensuing summer. A large army was mustered and sent into England for the purpose of establishing presbytery there. It was a time of great domestic sacrifices, severe taxation, and constant preaching and fasting, with a sad want of all that tends innocently to cheer the spirit of man. It was in these predisposing circumstances that we had our last grand visit of the plague, as has been already related. On this occasion, it reigned longer in Glasgow than in any other considerable town, not dying out there till October 1647. The general bearing of this double range of facts will be readily apprehended as indicating that destitution naturally leads to pestilential fever.

It would be of little service to relate these particulars of the sufferings of our ancestors by famine and pestilence, if we could not draw from them some general practical lessons for the guidance of living men.

We know that the Scottish people of old times were an earnest, religious people, with all those elements of the industrial character which have since come to a comparative maturity and obtained them a tolerably fair share of respect in the society of nations. They were, however, wholly ignorant of the laws of nature; they did not even know that such matters as scarcity and pestilence depended on natural laws; neither were they aware that our Creator has implanted principles in the human mind on which may be founded just rules for the commerce of nations, calculated to favour and advance the interests of all, and to form a protection against the worst evils of a failure of the fruits of the earth in any particular country. They consequently did not see any necessity for keeping their persons, their houses, and their neighbourhoods in that cleanliness which is required for health; they saw no reason for taking those measures by which we can now so greatly affect the productiveness of the soil, and shelter and protect its products; they did not even dream that a free liberal commerce amongst nations is calculated to be an effectual safeguard against local scarcity, seeing that it everywhere encourages production, and makes sure that what one country wants at any time, another can supply. On another point, they were wanting. From that very religious earnestness which is usually mentioned so much to their praise, they viewed all the arrangements of providence with very sombre feelings. Every adverse thing they sought to improve as a reason for greater and greater self-humiliation. Even when a better harvest came after a scarcity, and a thanksgiving was ordained for it, they were called on not to rejoice, but to mourn—to mourn for the shortcomings which had brought such judgments upon them, and try by thorough humiliation to avert further calamity. It was well meant; but this gloomy view of things was just the condition of mind most likely to lay them open to the invasion of fresh disease and suffering.

Now, the present generation has science to aid it in tracing those laws of the Creator by which the products of the earth are improved and protected, and also those on which the physical health of individuals depends. Many of us have come to fully know that, with cleanliness, a sufficiency of clothing, simple food, and pure air, the great requisites for health are secured; also that innocent cheerfulness, while not necessarily connected with a reprehensible levity, is one of the strongest sanative powers—the powers which enable us to resist disease. It is also beginning to be generally acknowledged that selfishness in our relations to foreign states is the reverse of a guard to our best secular interests, is, on the contrary, a condemnation of ourselves to poverty, and an exposure of ourselves to the full brunt of every failure of seasons which may happen within our borders. Were all these things universally known, and all reduced to practice, our present earthly condition would certainly be much improved—and not this only, for when the physical state is bettered, the minds of men, as a rule, are opened to moral improvements also. They are as yet but partially known and practised; but the knowledge and practice are extending. Let them be further, and as far as possible, extended. Let every person in this great country endeavour to have some understanding of it, and impart what he knows to others. Let the laws of health and the laws of social economy be everywhere treated with reverence, as the arrangements established by the Divine Author of the universe for the benefit of his creatures, and which we have only to know and to conform to in order to realise the blessings He designs for us. So shall we see peace, and happiness, and true reverence extended over the earth and over all orders of men, superseding the grossness and the ignorance of the past, and all the evils which flowed therefrom.

THE BABY SINGER.

It is the fashion to decry little poets and to despise the little songs they sing; and although we are not without our suspicions that the fashion has been set by little minds, since

> The Daisy we love, though the summer has Roses,
> And Swallows may twitter though Nightingales sing,

we are not going just now to oppose ourselves to it.

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* Calderwood's *Church History*.

We would venture, however, to remind critics of the 'slashing' and 'ripping' schools, that it is, at all events, not necessary to snub a poet who confines himself to little subjects—inasmuch as a Fieldmouse disturbed by the ploughshare has, in fit hands, been probably the cause of awakening more human pity than the dethronement of any monarch.

Welcome, then, to Mr Bennett, the Baby Singer, whom, at least, the Infant World acknowledge to be the true Laureate. This gentleman has harnessed his Pegasus to many a subject, political, humorous, and classical, and the divine animal has acquitted himself more than respectably in all; but in the Perambulator, in the Go-cart, in the conveyances, in short, which are patronised by the extreme youth of all ranks, its performances have been really unrivalled.

Mr Gerald Massey's *Babe Christabel* has received due honour in these pages before now, and we are well known to appreciate its beauties; but there is, nevertheless, a certain super-celestial air about that young lady which *Paterfamilias*, at all events, shakes his head at, and declines to accept, as consonant with *his* experience.

In Mr Bennett's descriptions, on the other hand, we seem to hear the very jerk of the cradle breaking the sweet monotony of the mother's song.

Lullaby! O lullaby!
Baby, hush that little cry!
        Light is dying,
        Bats are flying—
Bees to-day with work have done;
So, till comes the morrow's sun,
Let sleep kiss those bright eyes dry!
        Lullaby! O lullaby!

Lullaby! O lullaby!
Hushed are all things far and nigh;
        Flowers are closing,
        Birds reposing,
All sweet things with life have done.
Sweet, till dawns the morning sun,
Sleep then kiss those blue eyes dry!
        Lullaby! O lullaby!

In the new volume before us* there are several excellent songs—those which have little children for their subject, as usual, the best—but there is none which quite comes up to our old favourite, *Baby May*. Perhaps some of our readers may be even yet unacquainted with that lyric of the nursery, in which case, we could scarcely do them a pleasanter piece of service than by extracting it. It is a poem with which every woman, and every man with a heart within him, is charmed at the first reading, quite apart from its perfectness as a work of art. It bears criticism, indeed, of the strictest kind; but just as their 'mother's grave' bears the sons who come to 'peep and botanise' upon it. Critics are warned off the premises as trespassers. 'All the place is holy ground; hollow smile and frozen sneer' have no business there. Look at the child!

Cheeks as soft as July peaches—
Lips whose velvet scarlet teaches
Poppies paleness—round large eyes
Ever great with new surprise—
Minutes filled with shadeless gladness—
Minutes just as brimmed with sadness—
Happy smiles and wailing cries,
Crows and laughs and tearful eyes,
Lights and shadows, swifter born
Than on windswept autumn corn,
Ever some new tiny notion,
Making every limb all motion,
Catchings up of legs and arms,
Throwings back and small alarms,
Clutching fingers—straightening jerks,
Twining feet whose each toe works,
Kickings up and straining risings,
Mother's ever-new surprisings,
Hands all wants and looks all wonder
At all things the heavens under,
Tiny scorns of smiled reprovings
That have more of love than lovings,
Mischiefs done with such a winning
Archness that we prize such sinning,
Breakings dire of plates and glasses,
Graspings small at all that passes,
Pullings off of all that's able
To be caught from tray or table,
Silences—small meditations
Deep as thoughts of cares for nations
Breaking into wisest speeches
In a tongue that nothing teaches,
All the thoughts of whose possessing
Must be wooed to light by guessing,
Slumbers—such sweet angel-seemings
That we'd ever have such dreamings,
Till from sleep we see thee breaking,
And we'd always have thee waking,
Wealth for which we know no measure,
Pleasure high above all pleasure,
Gladness brimming over gladness,
Joy in care—delight in sadness,
Loveliness beyond completeness,
Sweetness distancing all sweetness,
Beauty all that beauty may be,
That's May Bennett—that's my baby.

What naturalness of paternal pride there is in that last line! How easy it is for a father to detect that *Baby May* must have been the author's *First*. Mr Bennett might surely be got to do the 'On the Birth of a Royal Infant' department of Mr Tennyson's office, for half the sack, or—as we almost fancy would suit him better—for a portion of what royal caudle chanced to be going upon the interesting occasion. The great author of *The Princess* is not good at describing Babies.

She felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hugged and never hugged it close enough,
And in her hunger mouthed and mumbled it,

is a perfect picture of a mother's joy upon her recovery of her lost infant, but the babe itself (*it!*) is dismissed with a single epithet, and that not a highly characteristic one—'soft.' It is fair to add, however, that when the Laureate wrote that poem he was a bachelor, and might, therefore, have shared the belief of that inexperienced race, that whatsoever toucheth a baby, maketh a hole in the same.

Who but a real poet could have made such a subject as the following—which seems to belong, by rights, to the 'Liliputian Warehouse' in High Holborn or elsewhere—awaken thoughts at least deep enough for tears?

BABY'S SHOES.

O those little, those little blue shoes!
Those shoes that no little feet use!
    O the price were high
    That those shoes would buy,
Those little blue unused shoes!

For they hold the small shape of feet
That no more their mother's eyes meet,
    That, by God's good-will,
    Years since grew still,
And ceased from their totter so sweet!

And oh, since that baby slept,
So hushed! how the mother has kept,

---

* *Songs by a Song-writer.* By W. C. Bennett. Chapman and Hall. 1859.

With a tearful pleasure,
That little dear treasure,
And o'er them thought and wept!

For they mind her for evermore
Of a patter along the floor,
And blue eyes she sees
Look up from her knees,
With the look that in life they wore.

As they lie before her there,
There babbles from chair to chair,
A little sweet face
That 's a gleam in the place,
With its little gold curls of hair.

Then O wonder not that her heart
From all else would rather part
Than those tiny blue shoes
That no little feet use,
And whose sight makes such fond tears start.

Such pathos is, unhappily, the staple of most songs composed upon babies. As frail as fair, they often bless us with their presence but for a little, and then depart, as though their angels could not spare them longer out of heaven. What slightest records of them then become to one pair of human hearts, or to the mother's heart, at least, 'dread memories for years!' What priceless value does the awful Appraiser, Death, set upon things which were next to valueless before his coming! The picture which was as nought to us while we possessed the living reality, is become a sacred treasure, and preserved in the innermost sanctuary at home.

THE LOCKET.

O casket of dear fancies—
O little case of gold—
What rarest wealth of memories
Thy tiny round will hold:
With this first curl of baby's
In thy small charge will live
All thoughts that all her little life
To memory can give.

O prize its silken softness,
Within its amber round
What worlds of sweet rememberings
Will still by us be found;
The weak shrill cry so blessing
The curtained room of pain,
With every since-felt feeling
To us 'twill bring again.

'Twill mind us of her lying
In rest soft-pillowed deep,
While, hands the candle shading,
We stole upon her sleep—
Of many a blessed moment
Her little rest above
We hung in marvelling stillness—
In ecstasy of love.

'Twill mind us, radiant sunshine
For all our shadowed days,
Of all her baby wonderings,
Of all her little ways,
Of all her tiny shoutings,
Of all her starts and fears,
And sudden mirths out-gleaming
Through eyes yet hung with tears.

There 's not a care—a watching—
A hope—a laugh—a fear
Of all her little bringing
But we shall find it here;
Then tiny golden warder,
O safely ever hold
This glossy silken memory,
This little curl of gold.

Thus far it will be owned this Laureate of Liliput, this Troubadour of the Bassinet, has borrowed of no brother of his craft; that his lyrics have been original as they have been natural and tender; but before we have done with him, it is but fair to shew how he can hold his own, when entering the lists with some of our older poets. He does not expend his energies, indeed, as some of them did, upon Inscriptions for a Grotto, or Lines upon a Crystal Spring; but the form, intention, and even metre of his lines are identical with many of theirs who have lived thus long, and are even now admired, with a not greater right, as we believe, to the laurel-crown than has Mr Bennett.

Have Waller or Shenstone ever written, in the same manner, anything more admirable than these two *Epitaphs for Infants?*

I.

On this little grassy mound
Never be the darnel found;
Ne'er be venomed nettle seen
On this little heap of green;
For the little lost one here
Was too sweet for aught of fear,
Aught of harm to harbour nigh
This green spot where she must lie;
So be nought but sweetness found
On this little grassy mound.

II.

Here the gusts of wild March blow
But in murmurs faint and low;
Ever here, when Spring is green,
Be the brightest verdure seen—
And when June 's in field and glade,
Here be ever freshest shade;
Here hued Autumn latest stay,
Latest call the flowers away;
And when Winter's shrilling by,
Here its snows the warmest lie;
For a little life is here,
Hid in earth, for ever dear,
And this grassy heap above
Sorrow broods and weeping love.

A SPANISH NOVELIST.

VISIONS of the immortal knight and squire of La Mancha are conjured up by these words; for, with a few trifling exceptions, Cervantes, until the last few years, has been *the* novelist of Spain. And is he not so still? the reader may ask. What rival of the chronicler of Dulcinea del Toboso has appeared amid the cork-tree forests and the bright sierras of that sunny land? Not a rival, any more than our Dickens and Thackeray are the rivals of our never-dying Scott. But a novelist, a powerful painter of national manners and customs, has of late arisen in Spain, and, under the pseudonym of Fernan Caballero, has published several very remarkable tales and sketches. As in the case of Miss Brontë, it was for some time a point in dispute whether the author of *The Gaviota*, *The Alvareda Family*, and *Honour before Honours*, was a man or a woman; but it is now proved beyond doubt that Fernan Caballero is identical with Señora Bohl da Faber, the daughter of a German merchant who settled at Cadiz, and there married a Spanish lady, distinguished both by talent and high birth. Their daughter married a Spanish nobleman, and enjoyed such favour at court, that, after the death of her husband, she was appointed governess to the Infants of Castile, and now resides at the Alcazar of Seville. Queen Isabella has lately caused a complete edition of her works to be published at the royal expense.

In many of her stories, Fernan Caballero describes the transition period when Andalucia had begun to throw off some of her ancient traditional manners and feelings. The transformation, as usual, commenced with the upper classes; and the writer says: 'It is amongst the people that we find the poetry of Spain and of her chronicles. Their faith, their character, their sentiments, all bear the seal of originality and of romance. Their language may be compared to a garland of flowers. The Andalucian peasant is elegant in his bearing, in his dress, in his language, and in his ideas.' From *Clemencia*, one of the longest and most interesting of the tales, I will translate the description, evidently drawn from life, of a rich Andalucian landed proprietor.

'Don Martin Ladron de Guevara was one of those great proprietors of land who are so firmly attached to their villages and to their houses that they seem to form part of them, like figures in bas-relief sculptured on a wall. Don Martin had received no instruction, except in matters of religion; for his parents used to say: "As he will inherit our property, what does he want of education?" He had never in his life opened a book; yet was he by nature and by instinct a true *caballero*, and he possessed considerable originality and wit, as well as the privilege which rich men in every land have of displaying these qualities, by saying freely whatever comes uppermost. Like a man who has been accustomed to be listened to with deference, Don Martin always spoke in a prompt, open, decided manner; and he would have addressed a king in the same tone which he used towards a beggar. He had always at his service an inexhaustible store of proverbs and dry sayings, which he called his *little gospels*. Don Martin was very charitable; he gave with full hands and without ostentation; setting so little value on his benefactions, and forgetting them so completely, that it used to give him offence when he heard them spoken of or praised.

'In 1804, known in Spain as "the year of the famine," when the poor were dying of hunger, and food was enormously dear, Don Martin had his granaries gorged with the produce of a large crop of *garbanzos*.* Every day he caused a portion to be distributed to the poor in his presence; each child carried away one cupful, each woman two, and each man three. One morning, very early, Don Martin's majordomo awoke him from his sound slumbers.

"Master," he said, "there are a number of muleteers from Seville just arrived, and in great haste to return with their loads of garbanzos."

"In great haste!" repeated Don Martin—"a pleasant joke! Tell them that I shall get up at my usual hour, then attend mass, and then eat my breakfast. Afterwards, at nine o'clock, they may speak with me."

'And Don Martin turned on his side, and was soon fast asleep again. At the appointed hour, he walked leisurely into the courtyard, where the muleteers and a number of poor people were awaiting him.

"God save ye!" he said, in his loud, cheerful voice, addressing the former. "So you want to buy garbanzos, eh?"

"Yes, Don Martin; and there shall be no dispute about the price; we have brought money enough to pay for them, almost at their weight in silver."

"And they are worth it," observed the majordomo. "Don Alonso Prieto has just sold his for six hundred reals the *fanega*."*

"We know it," replied the men. "Señor Don Martin, you will make your fortune this year."

"I am sorry, nevertheless, to tell you that you have come on a bootless errand. I cannot sell you these garbanzos, because they are no longer mine."

"Not yours? Ah, Don Martin, you are jesting with us."

"They are *not* mine, I tell you. Ought not I to know best?"

"Then to whom do they belong?"

"To these good people here," replied Don Martin, pointing to his pensioners. "Ask them if they will consent to have them sold. My children," he continued, raising his voice, "will you sell your garbanzos?"

'A clamour of mingled cries, supplications, and blessings arose in reply.

"But, Señor Don Martin"—— persisted the muleteers.

"What! don't you see that the owners refuse to sell them; so, what can I do?" was the reply of the kind old man.'

The humorous element is not wanting in these tales. In *One in the Other* there is a capital scene, where a lively young lady, impatient of the addresses of a rich blockhead, who is favoured by her parents, tries to scare him away by making pretensions to the most outrageous blue-stockingism. She makes verses, she writes books, she has in her portfolio a novel called *William Tell.* 'Come,' she says to her astounded lover, 'I will tell you its plot:

'William Tell was a noble Scottish mountaineer, who refused to salute the beaver-hat which the English general, Malbrook, had caused to be nailed to a post. This brought about the Revolution and the Thirty Years' War, from which my hero came out victorious, and was proclaimed King of Great Britain, under the name of William the Conqueror. But he tarnished his glory by beheading his wife, the beautiful Anna Bullen. In order to expiate this crime, he sent on a pilgrimage to Palestine his son, Richard Cœur-de-Lion. Richard, on his return, because of his religious zeal, was thrown into prison by Luther, Calvin, Voltaire, and Rousseau, who formed the Directory in France, the same revolutionary Directory which sent to the scaffold that sainted monarch, Louis XIV. It was then that, in order to avoid similar troubles in Spain, the king, Don Pedro the Cruel, established the Inquisition, whence he derives his surname.'

The writer adds: 'Nothing could be more comic than the matter-of-fact seriousness with which Casta uttered this string of absurdities; and it was rendered still more so by the fact, that having chosen the historical names and events with which her recollections of operas, sermons, newspapers, and conversations had supplied her, she knew, indeed, that her recital was not exact, but was very far from suspecting the enormity of its anachronisms.'

In *Elia, or Spain Thirty Years Since*, we are introduced to a 'little old gray-haired woman with a face wrinkled like a raisin, and with eyes as small and as sharp as capsicum seeds.' This is Donna Isabel Orrea, widow of the renowned and puissant *Asistente* of Seville, Don Manuel Farsan y Calatrava. The *Asistenta*, as she is called, is a Spanish lady of the old school, more royalist than the king, more Catholic than the pope, loving her old mansion, her old furniture, and her old paintings by Murillo and Velasquez, and being a determined enemy to innovation. She has two ancient servants, her steward

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* A sort of pea, much used for food by the Spanish peasantry.

* About one hundredweight.

Pedro, and her housekeeper Maria, who are both faithfully attached to her, and devoted to her interests, but who wage with each other a perpetual wordy war. On one occasion, in the presence of their mistress, Maria told her adversary that his figure was like a mattress, and his face like the noonday sun. He retorted by comparing the lady's person to a pruned vine-stalk, and her complexion to the parchment of the Indian archives. ‘I wish,’ said the Asistenta, half vexed and half amused, ‘that you were married to each other.’

‘With such a wife, señora,’ replied Pedro, ‘one would have no peace by day; and I 'll wager that at night, instead of snoring, she growls.’

‘For my part,’ said Maria, tossing her head, ‘I'd rather go into a convent at once than take such a lump of dough for my husband.’

‘I was once married, señora,’ remarked Pedro, ‘and I would not take a second wife, if it were the Princess of Asturias herself, on account of a story I once heard’——

‘Shut up with your foolish stories!’ cried Maria, sharply.

‘Tell it me, Pedro,’ said his mistress; ‘it will amuse me.’

‘Well, then, señora, once upon a time there were two friends who were greatly attached to each other, and who agreed that whichever of them died first should appear to the other, and tell him how matters went in the other world. They were both married men, and the first who died fulfilled his promise, and appeared to his friend. “How do you get on?” asked the latter. “Famously,” replied the ghost. “When I presented myself at the gate above, St Peter said to me: ‘What has been thy life?’ ‘Señor,’ I replied, ‘I am a poor man; I was married’—— ‘Say no more,’ said his holiness; ‘pass in; you have gone through purgatory, and now you may enter into glory.’” Then the apparition vanished, leaving his friend greatly satisfied and consoled. In process of time his wife died, and he married again. When the hour arrived that he was carried out of his house, feet foremost, he presented himself in high spirits to St Peter. “What has been thy life?” asked the saint. “I was married *twice*,” replied the new-comer confidently, taking a step in advance. “Back, gossip, back!” cried St Peter, locking the gate in his face: “we have no room in heaven for born idiots!”’

The plot of Fernan Caballero's tales is usually very simple, her forte consisting in the lively delineation of national manners, and in the exquisite discrimination of those subtle traits of human nature common to men and women in every land. Elia is the deserted child of a bandit, and has been adopted by the good old Asistenta, who has had her carefully educated in a convent. The Asistenta has a sister, the Marquesa de Val de Jara, who has two sons, one of whom, Don Carlos, falls in love with Elia. His haughty mother opposes the match, greatly to the indignation of his aunt, who believes that her beloved Elia is quite worthy of him. After many touching and admirably described scenes, Elia, after the death of her patroness, retires to the convent where she had been brought up, and her lover falls in battle.

The two old ladies have a married niece, the beautiful Condesa, Clara de Palma, who, having spent some time in France, returns to her Andalucian home, which she immediately begins to reform. Having got everything arranged according to her wishes, she invites her family to a banquet. The Marquesa was unable to go, but the Asistenta accepts the invitation. On her return, she visits her sister, and gives vent to her indignation. Her first aversion is Don Narciso Delgado, a physician domesticated in her niece's household, and who, she says, ‘thrusts his pointed nose into everything.’ ‘Fancy, Inez,’ she says, ‘when I entered the court, I saw that the beautiful fountain, with its basin full of coloured fishes, the statue of the armed cavalier, and the magnificent box-trees, which were the admiration of Seville, had all been removed. They had torn up the painted tiles which formed the pavement, and made an earthen bank, which they planted with weeping willows. Clara came out to receive me.

“Oh!” I exclaimed, “how *could* you touch that ancient statue?”

“Dear aunt,” she replied, “persons of taste considered it defective as a work of art, and disproportionally large. Is it not much more agreeable to see and hear the water falling into these alabaster basins?”

“But the box-trees,” I said, “what fault have you to find with them—were *they* disproportionally large? The box-trees, which amongst plants are the type of nobility, which are never found growing wild, or near any vulgar house! The box-trees, whose perfume is so peculiar, which never litter the soil with dead leaves, because the seasons find them as unchangeable as though Time did not exist for them! Dignified plants, which form their enormous trunks only after having lived for centuries in those families who regard them with veneration.”

“Aunt,” said Clara, “they were growing in horrid old-fashioned blue and white earthenware pots; and, besides, those formal plants cut to shape don't please me, they are so stiff and ungraceful.”

‘What answer could I make, Inez, to such nonsense? We went into the house, and then I saw that the great saloon had been despoiled of its magnificent collection of family pictures. Clara remarked carelessly that they had been removed to her husband's town-house. The walls were painted sea-green, and were adorned with portraits of celebrated characters—as our niece called them—in mahogany frames. I looked carefully at them all; and I give you my word, Inez, there was not a single Spaniard amongst them. In place of the cardinal, her great-grandfather's uncle, hung an ugly little old man, with a face like that of a hungry fox. As I was looking at it, up comes that forward Don Narciso.

“That excellent engraving,” he said, “is the portrait of the incomparable Voltaire.”

“Voltaire!” I exclaimed; “that wicked man whose writings have been prohibited, and whose maxims are condemned in all our pulpits! Well, señor, all I can say is, that his face is worthy of his deeds. Niece, you have made a pretty exchange.”

‘We passed into the second saloon—it was no less transformed. The seats of carved marble had disappeared, and in their stead were light mahogany chairs, without arms. The fine old historical paintings had been removed to the library, and in their places hung engravings which, old woman as I am, Inez, made me blush crimson. There was one of a goddess, as they called her, with very little on her.

“Clara,” I said, “how is it possible that you can exhibit such indecent things?’

“The beautiful ideal is raised above corporeal sentiments,” said that precious Don Narciso, again thrusting in his oar.

“Señor,” said I, “I don't know what you mean by the ‘beautiful ideal;’ but I know that bread is bread, and that wine is wine, and that a woman with very little on her is indecent. Clara, Clara, if the Inquisition were in existence, you would have to burn all these prints.”

“Inquisition!” exclaimed Don Narciso, starting backwards; “señora, that word scorches the mouth which pronounces it, and the eyes which see it.”

“Señor Delgado,” I replied, “if your conscience were as clear as mine, neither the word nor the thing need frighten you.”

‘Clara then proposed that we should go into the garden, hoping that what she had done there might please me better than the changes she had made elsewhere. I determined that I would, if possible, abstain from finding fault; but, sister, I could not. You remember at the top of the fountain, the negro mounted on a crocodile, with a plate of pine-apples in his hand—so natural. Well, I believe she had sent him to Guinea, to keep company with his living brothers. Then the tortoises, the snakes, the lizards, interspersed with such taste amongst the shells and pebbles, had all disappeared. And the box-trees—here, also, they had been uprooted. All sorts of common shrubs were planted in their place, with unpaved walks winding through them—walks where, if it rained, you should either have a boat, or put on leather shoes, like men. What devastation, Inez! enough to break one's heart. Is it not a shame, Don Pedro?' The steward made no reply.

'*Caspita!*' exclaimed his mistress impatiently, 'a cannon fired off in his ears would not rouse this worthy man from his apathy.'

'Señora,' said Pedro gravely, 'it would not become me to censure the actions of your excellency's niece.'

'Don Pedro is right,' said the Marquesa.

'He is *not* right!' exclaimed the Asistenta peevishly; 'every one ought to censure such proceedings.—But to go on with my story. By this time it was three o'clock. "When do we dine, Clara?" I asked. "At five," she replied. "San Antonio!" I exclaimed, "at five! I shall die of hunger first. And my siesta?" Clara ordered a servant to bring me a cup of soup, and then went to dress; but that soup, made by a French cook, was first-cousin to the chicken-broth which Don Narciso is so fond of ordering, and I lay down on a couch to try if at least I could get a little sleep. At five, we sat down to table. There was a man amongst the guests dressed in black, who, the captain-general, who sat next me, said was a celebrated violin-player. "Will you not attend his concert?" asked the general. "I? No, indeed," I answered; "perhaps I should hear the *Marseillaise*, or something equally wicked." The covers were removed—no olla! "Clara," I whispered to our niece, who sat at my other side, "your cook has forgotten the olla." "We never eat it, aunt," said she, laughing. I heard Narciso then say to the violin-player: "A country of routine, *mon cher*—a country of routine! Since the first Spaniard made the first olla, no one can eat anything else." I pretended not to hear, and tried to eat my dinner, but I could not bear the flavour of the French dishes; so I thought I would wait for the second course. When it came, just fancy!—instead of a turkey and ham, what did they serve but a haunch of venison! "Venison, Clara!" I said; "a thing that none but the poor people eat." "Aunt," said she, "I assure you that in London and Paris it is the most esteemed of all meats." The wild-fowl offended my nose with their strong smell, and Don Narciso thrust in his sharp one to assure me that in this their chief merit consisted.'

The old lady goes on to describe how little the remainder of the entertainment pleased her; and her cup of misfortunes, literally speaking, overflowed in the evening, when, instead of chocolate, the servants presented her with tea. '"Thank you very much, Clara," I said; "I never drink such stuff except when I am ill." So I took my leave, and here I am, ready, Inez, for a cup of your good chocolate, if you will give it me.'

Historical anecdotes, picturesque and romantic legends, are scattered through these tales, and add considerably to their peculiar interest. In *Honour before Honours*, there is a touching description of a young mother returning from her child's funeral. An old neighbour tries to comfort her.

'My child!' exclaimed the poor mother, 'who, when he was born, looked like a flower. Tio Bastian, you, who have your little grandson strong and healthy, do not know what it is for the tree when its flower is torn from it!'

'Its guardian angel has transplanted that flower to another garden, where it shall never be scorched by the sun nor blighted by the frost. If thy angel had done the same for thee when thou wast born, thou wouldst not have suffered so many troubles, nor shed so many tears.'

'That is true, Tio Bastian.'

'Then, Maria, why do you murmur loudly? you who were always so gentle and so patient.'

'It is,' replied she, 'because I know that if I had not given that soup to my child, he would not have died. Ah, it was that soup that killed him!'

'Hush, woman, hush!' said the old man; 'do children never die without having eaten soup? But so it is—Death is never to blame. They tell that Death did not like the office imposed upon him, and that he presented himself before the Almighty, and prayed that he might be relieved from it. "And wherefore?" asked the Eternal Father. "Because, Lord, all the world will abhor me, and call me a cruel tyrant." "Be content," said the Lord; "I promise that men shall always exculpate you." And so it has since ever been: sometimes we lay the blame on the food, sometimes on the physician; but we never allow that Death can enter unless the door be opened for him.'

In another place our writer says: 'Under the name of *cepa* is known in Spain the peculiar toll of the bell appointed in 1368 by the chapter of the cathedral of Cordova to be rung at the death of the members of certain noble families. It is produced by ringing the great bell with three others; and the privilege is confined to the descendants of Don Alonso Fernandez de Cordoba, Señor de Montemayor, of Don Gonzalo Fernandez de Cordoba, Señor de Aguilar, and of Don Diego Fernandez de Cordoba, Señor de Lucena—in remembrance and recognition of the gallant defence which in 1366 they made of that city against the king, Don Pedro, leagued with the Moors of Granada It happened once, when a queen of Spain died, tha a descendant of one of the above-named heroes hea that peculiar tolling of the bell. He asked the reaso "Señor, the queen is dead." "What, then!" he said "did the queen belong to the cepa?"'

One really feels *l'embarras de richesses* in culli extracts from these charming tales; and, fearing exceed all lawful limits, I shall conclude.

DANTE—A SONNET.

Of all Italia's bards the first and best—
  Far from the unworthy land that gave thee birth,
  By Adria's waves didst thou return to earth,
Unearthly Poet, and art now at rest.
The passions fierce that tore thy living breast,
  In that calm sphere no more can agitate;
  Thy Love is perfected—and awful Hate
In thy pure spirit is no more a guest.
For thee, on earth, the secret veil was riven;
  The realm of Sorrow, and the realm of Peace,
And Mount of Purging, to thine eyes were given.
Now, where the weary rest, where troubles cease,
  Again with purer eyes thou look'st on Heaven,
No more to wander from thy Beatrice.

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THE ENFIELD RIFLE.

IN ancient times, when the bow was the weapon used by nearly every nation, the strength, as well as the skill of the archer, was a matter of the greatest importance. Kingdoms, we are told, were sometimes allotted to that son who could draw to the full extent the bow of his father.

When we observe, even in the present age of rapid progress, the difficulty that there is to make individuals move in any but old grooves, it is not surprising that there was a great struggle before the first rude firearms were preferred to the bow and arrow as weapons of war. With the latter, men were well acquainted, and were able to use them with great skill; the former were rough in construction, and the bowmen naturally looked upon them with contempt.

It is surprising, until within the last few years, how little alteration or improvement was made in the firearms used by the army. Old systems, and the non-expansive natures of those in authority, naturally retarded progress. Many of us may remember the prejudice which existed against the introduction of the Minié rifle, and the partiality which was shewn to Brown Bess. 'It did its work in the Peninsula, and you had better not make any change,' was the remark of many a veteran warrior. Brown Bess is now amongst the things which were, but are not; whilst its successor, the Minié, has also had to haul down its colours to the infallible Enfield Rifle, which may be said to wear at present the champion's belt. How long it will be before the day of the Enfield rifle is past, and 'breech-loaders' usurp its place, is amongst the mysteries of the future.

It is our present business to describe some of the wonders connected with the construction of the Enfield rifle; and we will now ask the reader to accompany us from London to the Enfield factory.

Twelve miles from the Shoreditch station of the Eastern Counties Railway, we reach a dreary-looking station, entitled 'Ordnance Factory.' Quitting the train, and crossing the rails, we at once find ourselves in a muddy lane, on each side of which are flat meadows, separated from each other by four-feet wide ditches. Here the tadpoles are sentimentally reposing at the bottom of the water, as though reflecting upon that vicious state of society which requires fifteen hundred rifles to be turned out per week from the smoky buildings in that peaceful locality. A quarter of a mile of muddy lane, three hundred yards of wooden footpath, a quarter of a mile of canal bank, and we cross the bridge which leads to the Ordnance Factory, Enfield.

Producing our credentials, we are at once handed over to a major-domo, who conducts us into a vast room filled with machinery. Through this we pass, and enter a smithy, where we are introduced to the principal, who is instructed to shew us all in his department, to pass us on to the next superintendent, and so on through the various branches.

'And what do you call the various branches?' we naturally ask.

'There is the Bayonet, the Ramrod, the Lock, the Stock, the Furniture—that is, the brass-fittings, &c.—and the Barrel.'

'And how many processes does each pass through?'

'The bayonet, about forty-eight; the ramrod, about thirty; the lock, about two hundred and twenty; the stock, twenty-four; the barrel, sixty-six.'

'Of how many parts is the Enfield rifle composed?'

'Of fifty-six.'

Three or four days at least would be required to examine thoroughly the machines and their results.

The bayonet first arrests attention; and we observe a stout little cylindrical chunk of iron, about four inches in length, which we are told is the first state of the bayonet. This is merely the iron, which is supplied from Sheffield, and which is to be educated into the deadly weapon, for the use of which the English soldier has ever been famous. Heating and hammering are the earliest ordeals to which the bayonet is subjected. Heavy hammers, swung in circles by strong arms, descend with unerring precision on the required spot. One man, with a pair of iron fingers, holds and turns the metal, while the other knocks it about. To a nervous bystander, this process is very trying; for he who holds will certainly receive the blow of the hammer on the centre of his forehead, if he does not move his head just one inch and three-fourths. The hammer approaches; the man bends back only just in time, and only just the required distance. Again he is in danger—again he escapes; and thus he has gone on, blow after blow, day after day, month after month. Talk about confidence in princes, let us see on earth more confidence than this holder places in his hammerer. We are, however, convinced that sooner or later the final catastrophe must come, and the blacksmith will be killed by his partner. It was here that we saw the water-gauge, by which the amount of iron requisite to form a bayonet is accurately tested—a tube containing a given quantity of water, into which the iron is thrust. When the water reaches the top of the gauge, the correct quantity of iron has been inserted. However irregular the iron may be in form, the right amount is sure to be thus obtained.

Our attention is now called to a curious machine behind us. This looks like some nervous infuriated monster mouth, which is armed with a row of grinders. The creature is evidently in a rabid state, for the grinders are being gnashed together with fearful rapidity, while the water runs over them. A smith boldly approaches this, holding in his hand a red-hot bar of iron, which he places between the grinders. Delight at once seizes them, for they move more rapidly than before; and instantly the bar of iron is chawed out a couple of inches longer.

The bar is then inserted in a fresh place, is again lengthened, and so on until we are shewn a stick of iron not at all unlike a bayonet. A most formidable individual then measures and inspects, gauges and tests, this piece of iron; length, breadth, weight, and colour are examined. Should the bit be below or above gauge, below or above par, 'mulct so much' is the fate of the last workman. Each man thus has his responsibility, from which there is no escape, and for which there is the simple remedy, 'a fine.'

The finishing-room is entered from the smithy, and is about two hundred feet square. Wheels and men, cranks and levers, leather bands and iron, are moving apparently in the greatest confusion, but yet all is regulated with the accuracy of clock-work.

At one end of the room are a set of offices, in which the foremen carry on their duties. In front of these, and commanded by them, are avenues, down which the raw unfinished work is conveyed. Passing from hand to hand, from machine to machine, the bayonet, ramrod, or lock starts 'in the rough,' and returns complete, tested as it travels between one machine and its neighbour, and again as it arrives at its destination. Improvements are frequently being made in the various machinery, by which expensive hand-labour is saved. By means of a huge iron stamping-hammer, L.1500 a year has been saved in the formation of the exterior of the lock. The filing of the trigger-guard by machinery has saved five guineas a week. If this rate of saving be continued, the Enfield rifle may soon be made for a very trifling sum.

The machine called the copying-machine is extensively used at Enfield; this was invented by an Englishman some years ago, for the purpose of copying the fine lines of statuary. The Americans were the first who employed it to the purpose of gun-making. It is simply that one instrument moves round an iron model, whilst another moves in exactly a similar manner over the iron or wood which is to be cut. Thus perfect similarity of form is obtained, and a particular part of one lock will fit into the similar part of any other which has been made at this manufactory.

Arrangements are made so that the portion of work which may require the greatest time may be given the greatest number of machines or workmen. Thus each portion is finished at exactly the same time, and is brought to the workman who puts them together.

The execution of the wood-work is even more wonderful than that of the iron, not that the machines are more ingenious, but the results appear more magical, on account of the rapidity with which they are obtained. During the examination of the construction of the lock, we have gradually arrived at the conclusion that the teaching of our early youth as regards the hardness of metals must have been very false.

We were formerly impressed with a belief that iron and brass were hard; this we now find was entirely a delusion. There goes a piece of brass into a machine, down comes a spike and bores a hole through it as calmly as though the brass were butter. There is another bit having bristles shaved off it far more readily than we can shave off our own bristles on a frosty morning. Here are iron, steel, and brass, in the shape of lock plates, triggers, tumblers, bridles, cocks, sight-leafs, and swivels, being stamped and cut, and scraped as though they were bits of cream-cheese. Quite a popular error it must be to consider that iron is hard—apparently nothing can be softer. So lifelike do the machines appear, and so automatically do they do their work, that we feel as the man Friday must have done when he asked the gun not to kill him; if the opportunity offered, we should much like to have a quiet talk with some of those wise machines. With these ideas we enter the stock-making department, and there we find three machines on which is stamped 'Ames, Massachusetts'—thus shewing that our cousins across the Atlantic have contributed their share to the works at Enfield. From Italy, Belgium, and France, the walnut-wood is sent to Enfield in the rough, just outlined in the proper form, and ready to be handled by these machines. The first machine saws off pieces, and rounds ends and sides, pushing the stock away when the work is finished. The second rounds the ends from the muzzle-end half-way down to the stock; this is done on the copying principle. The third finishes what the second left undone, and these three machines leave very little to be done by hand as regards form. The excavations for the bedding of the lock and other parts are accomplished in a few minutes at separate machines.

The first state of the barrel is that of a slab of iron which weighs $10\frac{1}{4}$ pounds. This is welded and finished in a building separated from the main building. The first process causes this plate or slab to become a tube; it is then drawn out to the required length, the bore being kept hollow by means of a rod of iron; the breech-piece is welded on by means of a nervously excitable steam-hammer, which strikes a series of blows with uncommon rapidity. The boring is then proceeded with, many and various instruments being used. The outside is next turned, and any extra parts are taken off. The viewing then takes place. This is performed by a skilful workman, who places himself opposite a gas-lamp, or where there is a great light. To this he directs the barrel, so as to bring the light down the bore; he then slowly turns the tube, and is thus enabled at once to detect the slightest deviation from a straight line. Should any irregularities be discovered, the viewer taps the barrel with a hammer until the tube is perfectly true. The rifling of the barrel is then proceeded with. The proving is not the least important part of the process, although it is one which requires the least skill. The barrels are proved in a small room apart from the other buildings. The barrels, before being browned, are laid into stocks fitted for the purpose, and charged with $7\frac{1}{2}$ drams of powder and a bullet; the door the room is closed, and the barrels are discharg means of strings which are fastened to the tr and which can be pulled from the outside of the Four drams are then discharged as before, and barrels which have stood these proofs are con sound. Sometimes there appears a flaw in the and then powder is added and charges fired, until barrel is burst. We were informed that such a had occurred some weeks previous to our visit, and it was not until 20 drams of powder had been used several times, that the desired result was obtained. Our informer stated that he had even then his doubts whether the bursting was not caused in consequence of the bullet not being quite rammed home.

The browning of the barrel is a very delicate operation, and one which must be very trying to at least one of the individuals concerned, for in a room in which the thermometer must stand at about 140 degrees, a man remains upwards of twenty minutes to superintend the drying. Here it is that the mechanic is at last affected by external circumstances. The state of the weather is, in the browning, an important matter. If it should be wet, not more than half as much work can be accomplished as though it were dry. Flaws are more likely to occur during wet than during fine dry weather, and for every flaw, somebody has to be mulcted, for all is contract-work. A very small speck upon a barrel had been detected by the sharp eyes of the examiner; a chalk-mark against it shewed that this would not be allowed to pass; and twopence-halfpenny was the loss which the man who had imperfectly done his work would suffer for this one flaw.

Upon the ringing of a bell, from twelve to fourteen hundred men and boys turn out in the open air; they fill to the ceiling the half-dozen public-houses which possess a monopoly here. Crammed in rooms, seated on benches outside, on gates, rails, &c., these fourteen hundred mechanics take their rough and ready meal. Vainly do a sturdy bar-man and his three assistants attempt, by unexampled activity, to supply the demand for 'pots of arf and arf.' Time is short; in one hour must all these thirsty Vulcans supply their dried-up juices; and around the bar, from pigeon-holes near and far, or even outside, there is a continual cry for varieties of malt. Even the throats of these men are but mortal, and at length they cry enough; and about a quarter of an hour before the period of feeding expires, a partial silence ensues, whilst the fumes of a thousand pipes are wafted over the marshes. A bell rings, and again are the 'publics' deserted, whilst footsteps alone tell of the recent crowd—the bar-keeper having, however, a substantial memento of the recent visit.

The weapon that is at length turned out is, with its bayonet, 6 feet ½ inch long, and weighs 9 pounds 8 ounces. The length of the barrel is 3 feet 3 inches; its weight is 4 pounds 2 ounces; and the diameter of the bore is ·577 inch. The bullet is elongated, and takes three-quarters of a turn whilst in the barrel. The general figure of the bullet is cylindrical, its front-end rounded, and its rear-end has a conical-shaped cavity formed in it. The delay which was so great a drawback when the old rifle was required to be used, is now entirely done away with. The wooden plug which is now placed in the bullet instead of the iron cup, greatly diminishes the fouling. The diameter of the bullet is ·568 inch; length, 1·0625; and weight, 530 grains. The service-charge of the rifle is 2½ drams, and the weight of sixty rounds of ammunition, including 75 caps, is 5 pounds 8 ounces. The rifle is sighted up to 900 yards, but its practice is good at much longer ranges. A bullet, when fired from a distance of 100 yards, would pass through twelve half-inch planks. The advance which had been made in rifled firearms placed the artillery for a time at a disadvantage; but the recent invention of Sir W. Armstrong will now place matters upon a different footing. Before any more inventions are made with either weapon, it will be necessary to fix upon the guns small telescopes, to enable the gunners to distinguish friends from enemies, before destruction is dealt out. With the aid of the Enfield rifle and the Armstrong gun, we may fairly expect to hold our own against any or all our enemies, provided that our rulers will take care neither to be caught napping, nor to be lulled by false ideas of security. If England will be true to herself, she need fear no foe.

A ROMANCE OF THE PASSING ERA.

We have a number of strange stories of Scotsmen turning up in distant regions of the world, in positions wonderfully in contrast with their native poverty and obscurity; one, for instance, of a certain vizier at Constantinople proving to be identical with the son of the bellman of Kirkcaldy. But perhaps none of these tales, veracious or fabulous, involves a more romantic transition than one which the possession of some rather novel documents puts it in our power now to relate. This new story, moreover, involves a set of alleged powers or susceptibilities more wonderful than any ever laid in the name of Cagliostro, or any of the magicians of the middle ages.

The subject of our sketch is a young man, born near Edinburgh in March 1833, but who was taken at the age of nine by his parents to America, where he has spent the greater part of his subsequent life. When we state that he was, only eight years ago, apprentice to a humble trade in the town of Norwich, Connecticut, and has since been the favoured visitor of several European courts, and was last summer married to a Russian lady of noble birth and large fortune, and all this without the possession of any special talents, attainments, or external attractions, the curiosity of the reader will probably be thoroughly aroused regarding him. The peculiarities by which he has actually been enabled to attain so high distinctions are such as usually render a man an object of suspicion—it is true, but the fact and circumstances of the elevation do not the less constitute a modern marvel of a kind well deserving of notice. The whole case becomes the more interesting to us, from its being strangely involved with that of a living sovereign of equally marvellous history, and the development of whose destiny is yet in the future.

Mr Daniel D. Hume is a slender, fair-complexioned young man, with no peculiarity of appearance beyond that of extremely weak health. He has till lately had no education but that of his original grade. Obliged at seventeen by bad health to quit the humble trade to which he had been apprenticed, he was in some danger of destitution, his father being too poor to assist him; but it chanced at that time that a great number of people of the middle and upper classes in America were interested in a system held by them as a new revelation of the spiritual or ultra-physical world, while condemned by the outer public as a monstrous delusion. Whether true, or partially true, —true in the external facts, and only misunderstood and misnamed—or altogether moonshine and folly—certain it is that thousands of passing-shrewd people, who at first regarded it in the latter light, were brought round to see something else in it, and to enter on its investigation with a portion of the ardour of the national mind. There was such a group of people at Springfield, Massachusetts, and some rich men among them. To them Hume came, penniless and forlorn, for patronage and a livelihood, because from childhood he had possessed the gifts which qualified him to be one of those passive priests of the new temple, named in America 'mediums'—that is, human organisms fitted to bring out the latent spiritual existences, and enable them to hold converse with living persons. More than this, wherever Hume was, spirits worked around him, producing the most singular mechanical results. Thus, when left at three years old to play on the carpet, and too weakly to move about, his playthings were brought to his hands by invisible means. Of things more than mortal, he had then, as the poet supposes of Shakspeare, his visions. Being thus endowed, he was eagerly received into the 'circles,' or investigation-clubs, as they might be called, at Springfield, one gentleman named Elmer being good enough to give him a home, in which he remained about a year. 'There were,' says a local journal,[*] 'great stories of the marvels he performed while here, and many of the "solid men" of the city had the honour of riding tables that were lifted and tumbled about by the stress of his mysterious power.' Amongst those who came to a belief in the honest reality of these things, was a young native of Minorca, named Andreau, a printer, who in time favoured the public with an account of his experiences. He professed to have been, while in Hume's presence, touched by invisible hands; bells moved by invisible means round the company; and the floor and furniture shook as if under an earthquake. But at length Hume tired of the life he led at Springfield, and came to New York, with the design of studying medicine as a profession; and he actually entered on such a course under the care of a homœopathic physician, named Gray.

A gentleman signing himself L. J. Worth, lately communicated, through a New York paper, some particulars of an experience he had had in Hume's company, in November 1854, when 'billeted' with him at the village of Ravenswood. 'I proposed to Hume,' he says, 'to allow me to lie down with him when he went to bed, for an hour or two, as I was told that some curious manifestations might be expected. Accordingly, taking off only my coat and boots, I ensconced myself alongside of him under the bed-clothes, first locking the door and fastening the window-shutters, and ascertaining that we were the sole occupants of the room.

'Almost immediately after the light was extinguished, I heard raps all around me—on the floor, on the walls, on the head-board, on my pillow; in fact, everywhere. The sounds varied in intensity from light taps on the pillow to loud, resounding blows upon the floor and walls. I asked many questions, and received intelligent answers by means of these raps. I saw, also, in various parts of the room, nebulous-looking and wandering lights, now and then crossed by dark irregular shadows. Soon I felt soft and gentle touches, as if by a human hand, upon the top and back of my head, followed quickly by the placing of a cool, moist hand upon my forehead, which I was told by means of the raps was the hand of Hume's deceased mother. In a few moments, another spirit came, and after touching me from my feet upwards, also placed a hand upon my forehead, gently pulling and smoothing my beard, and closing up my eyes, and then rapping out answers to many questions upon the closed lid. His hand felt soft and warm. Still another spirit now came, and stepped upon the bed, and began walking over it, feeling to me as if a child had climbed up and was walking over us, stepping carefully over us, and between us, but not upon us, the bed-clothes being indented at each footfall. In a few moments, however, the spirit lay down on the outside of the bed, and on us both, pressing with all the weight, and precisely in the same manner that a living child might have done.

'The spirit then wished me good-night by the raps, and apparently departed. The whole occupied about half an hour, and during the whole time Hume and I lay upon our backs covered to the chin by the bed-clothes, and touching each other the entire length of our persons, from shoulders to heel; and during it all Hume did not stir in the least, and made no muscular movement, other than that caused by his breathing.'

His health failing him again, Hume was recommended by his friends to pay a visit to England, and supplied by them very generously with the means. He arrived in London in April 1855, and lived for some time with Mr Cox of the hotel of that name, Jermyn Street, where many notable persons visited him, and appeared satisfied with the reality of the alleged phenomena attending him. Amongst the private persons whom he visited, was Mr J. S. Rymer, a barrister residing at Ealing, near London, who has since published with his name an account of what took place. He tells us that, after many such marvels as the liftings of tables, the moving about of accordions, and the playing of tunes on them by unseen hands, had occupied several evenings, the following took place: 'The table was near the window; it was twilight—my second girl was touched by a hand; sounds were heard; the accordion was played. . . . . It was then spelt out by sounds on the table, "Some will shew you their hands to-night." The table was then gently raised and lifted up several times. A hand appeared above the table, and took from the dress of one of the party a miniature brooch, and handed it to several at the table. Hands and arms were then distinctly seen by all at the table, of different forms and sizes; sometimes crossed as in prayer, and at other times pointing upwards.' 'We have not only,' he adds, 'seen hands and arms, but they have been repeatedly felt by all at table as distinctly as though they were the hands and arms of living mortals, and we have very frequently shaken hands with them as really and substantially as one man shakes hands with another.'[*] Most people will revolt somewhat at these recitals; but it must be generally owned that, as the avowed belief of an educated gentleman of good character in our age, they are highly remarkable. It may be noticed that they are accompanied by many expressions shewing the earnest religious impressions under which their author lives.

With pecuniary means supplied by Mr Rymer, Hume went to Paris in July, accompanied by Mr Rymer's son, and nominally as the young man's tutor. Some American gentlemen then took him along with them to Florence, where he spent the winter, and astonished many English residents with his marvels. Here, however, a revolution took place in his mind. He became convinced that the phenomena in America, however veritable, were of a discommendable nature, in as far as they had not in general a religious aspect. The doctrines of the Catholic church, recommended to him probably by the affinity of the so-called miracles of the saints to his own mysterious gifts, were embraced by him. The priests, however, condemned the exercise of his alleged control of spirits, and he soon after announced that the power had suddenly deserted him. On the 27th of March 1856, he was received into the Catholic church. At first, he feared that he should again be thrown destitute; but a Polish nobleman now took him up, and conducted him to Paris, where he remained for several months in low health and devoid of his former power. At length, after a year's cessation—namely, in February 1857—it returned in all its former force, and he was speedily introduced into very high circles, not excepting that of the court. During the ensuing month, Mr Hume and his spirits were the reigning topic of Paris. In the presence of the emperor, the empress, and a very small and select party, many of the marvels previously described are alleged to have taken place, leaving impressions of mingled wonder and suspicion. The emperor beheld all with his characteristic nonchalance, and never allowed an expression of assent to drop from his lips. It has been stated, however, that, on his saying, one evening, that he could not be convinced of the presence of a spirit unless he should receive from one some raps on the shoulder, immediately some hard blows were given him in that quarter. The empress was made to lift a heavy table which at other times she could scarcely move; and such piece of furniture was one night made to float in the air, so high that her imperial husband's arm could scarcely reach its legs. She put her handkerchief, Spanish fashion, under her garter, and desired Hume to ask his spirits to tell where it was. Presently, it is said, she felt a pair of clammy cold hands disengaging it, and it was immediately after seen floating in the air. According to all the accounts of Hume, his demeanour on these occasions was quiet and unimpassioned, the contrary of the usual conduct of a conjuror. Three gentlemen on one occasion played a trick upon him, which was at first rather damaging, because it raised a laugh against him. It was suggested to him to ask the spirit of Socrates to appear, and, when he obeyed, a figure like the Greek philosopher came forward, and passed before the company. Frederick the Great, in like manner, was summoned, and presented himself; but Hume, detecting something inappropriate, became convinced there was imposture in both cases. At his command, the personator confessed the trick. It was unlucky for this attempt at ridicule, that the appearances presented were not of a nature which ever before took place among the spiritualists, or were within the alleged powers of Hume.

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[*] *Springfield Republican*, November, 1858.

[*] Mr Rymer's pamphlet, from which these extracts are made, was published by Mr Baillière, in 1857.

Early in the summer of 1857, Hume was enabled, by the liberality of Louis Napoleon, to revisit America, chiefly for the purpose of bringing a young girl, his sister, to Paris, the empress having undertaken to have her educated. While in his native village, he employed a part of the means at his disposal in purchasing a farm for his uncle. Returning in September, he was immediately telegraphed for to the court at Fontainbleau, and there introduced to the king of Bavaria. Soon after, we find him at Baden-Baden, on an intimate footing with the king of Würtemberg, and other great persons. One cannot but say that, on any theory of imposture, it is most discreditable to all these great folk that none of them have yet been able to detect it.

Not long afterwards, Hume was 'impressed' to go to Rome; by which we suppose is meant, that some of his invisible familiars tacitly impelled him to travel thither. Immediately on arriving, he was met by a friend, who expressed the greatest gratification in seeing him, having for some time been anxious to introduce him to a Russian family of rank, who were interested in his history. He was conducted accordingly, to the lodgings of the Count Koucheleff, where he experienced a most favourable reception, and in three weeks a marriage between him and the count's sister was arranged. In July 1858, he came to London, and thence to Edinburgh, for the purpose of obtaining those certificates of parentage and nativity which are required for a marriage in Russia. The nuptials were celebrated on the 1st of August at St Petersburg, under circumstances of the highest *éclat*. The emperor sent two of his aides-de-camp to be present, and gave Mr Hume a diamond ring of the value of three hundred guineas. Alexandre Dumas, the celebrated novelist, made a special tour into Russia, to act as groomsman; and he has given us some account of how this was determined on. As a specimen of the man, it is perfect:

'On seeing me enter, the Count and Countess Koucheleff rose, came to meet me, conducted me to an arm-chair, and then sat down, one on my right, the other on my left. "Monsieur Dumas," said the count to me, "we have observed how fatigued you were when going away at two o'clock in the morning." "I confess to you, count," I replied, "that it quite deranges my habits." "Well," said the countess, "henceforth, we shall suffer you to go at midnight." "It is very easy to say so, countess." "What could I do?" "It must, however, be attempted, but on one condition," said the count. "What?" The countess undertook to answer: "That you come with us to St Petersburg." I bounded, the thing seemed to me so foolish. "Caper, frisk," said the countess, "yet we confidently expect you." "But it is impossible, countess." "How impossible?" asked the count. "Undoubtedly." "You must set out next Tuesday—that is to say, in five days." . . . .

'"Countess," said I to her, "I require three days to decide." "I give you three minutes," said she. "Either we will refuse our sister to Monsieur Hume, or you shall be his groomsman." I rose, went on the balcony, and deliberated. I remembered that my resolution had already been formed to set out for Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt; considered that Mazeline, the ship-builder, demanded five months to finish our vessel; still thought that under the circumstances, nothing could be more interesting than a journey through Russia. I reflected that the readers of *Monte Christo*, being my especial friends, would accept what I should give them, quite certain that I would do all I possibly could not to alienate them. I thought at last all this mere madness; and this was, I much fear, the reflection which determined me. After two minutes and a half, I returned to the countess. "Well?" she inquired of me. "Well, countess," I responded, "I depart with you." The count warmly pressed my hand. Hume embraced me. And this is how, dear readers, I set out. Behold me already at St Petersburg.'

Whether, contrary to rule, there are to be post-matrimonial chapters to this romance, remains to be seen. It is alleged that the hero undertook with his bride that there are to be no more spirit manifestations. Already, however, the engagement has been broken, for the curiosity of the Russian court was too great to be resisted, and he is said to have given way to their desires.

COLD WATER ON COLD WATER.

Cold water has been having its own way a long time; running like a mill-race over every natural prejudice in favour of warmth and comfort, and swamping every plea for tolerance in its insolent career. Hydropathy has been keeping the wickets for a good long time, and it is but fair that Hydrophobia should have *her* innings for a little. For my own part, I detest cold water as I do cold steel. The victim in the German story who is cut in two by so sharp a sword that he only feels a drop of water 'cold at his stomach,' experienced a feeling the converse of mine, whenever what is called spring—which is winter—water touches my epidermis. There is no torture to me so frightful as that of the shower-bath, except, perhaps, that of the three-quarters of an hour of expectation which precede it, when, shivering in that iron frame, I endeavour to screw my courage up to pull the string; but I always pull the bell instead, and get the servant to invoke the deluge at last. Suffocation and a sort of frozen hysterics supervene; but upon the return of consciousness and reason, I leap out, and into bed, undried, indignant, and ashamed. Although I speak of this as my custom, I never voluntarily endured the terrible experience but once, when it shook my constitution to its basis. I would far rather be blindfolded, and run the chance of the seven red-hot ploughshares of the olden time, than venture with my eyes open upon the certain horrors of this modern invention. I believe the sensations of the vertebræ under these circumstances and under those of hanging are almost identical, but the latter experience is, at least, the shorter of the two. I did not feel myself again, after that shower-bath, for more than a fortnight. The devotees of the superstition affirm that a charming glow succeeds this discipline; but if so, it is a glow of a very peculiar nature, which makes one's teeth chatter and one's flesh creep for days together. That, by long habit, persevering fanatics may inure themselves to this practice, is likely enough; just as they may get to eat fire and swallow swords, without inconvenience; but their pretence that nature is on their side, and agreeable to so monstrous a custom, is an assertion only worthy of a native of the Feejee Islands.

Heaven forbid that I should attack cleanliness, or the use of water for any purpose; but I do maintain that, with the exception of my hands and my face, all portions of my frame resent the use of cold water most unmistakably. Other persons may be otherwise constituted, but I rather suspect that the majority of the human race sympathise with me. That everybody would please himself in this matter, without hindrance or impertinent reflection of any kind, is my desire; but, unfortunately, this they are not permitted to do. The advocates of cold water are perpetually insulting and crowing over those persons whose skin happens to be in a natural state. 'You don't wash yourself enough,' is their delicate suggestion. 'You should have a shower-bath every morning, summer and winter, as I do. Do you know, whether the ice is broken or not, into my tub I go, every day of my life?'

If these people are fools enough to make themselves thus miserable—for I have seen them eyeing those hideous engines of ablution with unmistakable expressions of agony and fear—what is it to me? And why should they boast of it? If it is so very delightful as they give out, why don't they keep the precious discovery to themselves, as their custom is with regard to other matters? If they really have the assurance to think themselves cleaner than other people, they should at least have the modesty to be silent upon that matter of superiority. Even the 'unco guid,' the extra pious, however sanctimonious and spiritually proud they may appear, do not go about with a brazen trumpet, like these cold-water worshippers. 'We bathe,' say these, 'thrice in the day; we use the shower-bath, the long-bath, the hip-bath, the foot-bath; we have horse-hair bands, horse-hair gloves, horse-hair brushes, to scour ourselves withal. All are unclean save ourselves, who are scarcely ever out of cold water from morning to night.' The only reply which we have found to be in the least efficacious against one who boasts himself of these perpetual ablutions, is the following: 'Well, some people do seem to need a good deal more cleaning than others.' It is not a graceful rejoinder, but the discomfiture of the vain-glorious hydropathist is certain.

Everybody knows the story—and therefore, since it is always pleasant to recognise an old friend, I will repeat it—of the bathing adventure of dear stammering Charles Lamb; how, being advised by the doctors to try sea-water for his health, he warned his 'dippers' that they were to pay no attention to his 'coming struggles,' which he knew against such objectionable discipline must needs be tremendous (for, as for going in of his own free-will, the great humorist was not a man to be capable of such an act). As he had expected, there was a great combat between him and his athletic tormentors; but at last they got him in and under water. 'Dud, dud, dud, dud, *don't*,' stuttered he, as soon as he got back his breath again; but they drowned his remonstrances, before they were articulate, in another plunge. 'Yer, yer, yer, yer, you're not,' cried he, after the second immersion; but in he was dipped again, without mercy, six miserable times. 'You're not to do it *more than once*,' was the remark which he had desired to convey to them, the doctors having enjoined upon him the necessity of confining himself, in his delicate state of health, to one dip per diem.

I myself, upon a visit to a certain doctor in Germany (who was once my friend), suffered even worse things than the author of *Elia*. He kept a Hydropathic establishment upon the banks of the romantic Rhine; but although I despised him for it, I went to visit him all the same, since nothing was further from my intention than to let him operate upon me. But alas! upon the very first morning of my arrival—and while the sun had power to light, but by no means to warm—two fiends, in strange apparel, and with gibbering tongue, seized hold of me, and hauled me forth from my warm bed. They carried me to the bank of that arrowy stream, running as usual as fast as possible from Switzerland, and there, despite my screams and vehement defence, they thrust me in. This violence was not of course committed in the sight of gods and men, but within a dreary grating (very like the fish-stew of a Thames punt) through which the river ran. Stopping a few seconds upon this side of drowning me, these wretches then conveyed me to a sort of wash-house, and swathed me round in winding-sheets, dripping wet, until I was as tightly trussed as a mummy. Then they carried me back to my own chamber, and placing me in my bed—little better than the corpse I looked—departed with a grin.

When the man that had been my friend came to see me in the course of an hour or so, and inquire why I did not come to breakfast, I thought I should have burst with impotent rage, consequent upon my inability to assault him. In vain he attempted to excuse his myrmidons, as not understanding the English language, and being used to very violent objections made by newly arrived patients. He had the assurance to state that, after a week or so, the treatment would seem quite pleasant, and instanced the profuse perspiration into which terror and anger had thrown me, as a proof that the system agreed with me. I need not say, however, that as soon as I was liberated and dressed, I shook the dust off my shoes against that establishment, as well as my fist in the face of its proprietor.

The cup of bitterness, which has at different times been forced upon me by the devotees of cold water, was, finally filled, last autumn, in the Highlands. I was not there with the intention of chasing the wild deer, or following the roe (nor do I even know the difference between those two diversions), and far less of standing up to my knees in running streams with a rod in my hand, whether with the superstitious idea of penance, or of fly-fishing. No, I was at the picturesque village of Kilmurdoch, N. B., with the sole object of writing a work of the imagination, in octosyllabic verse—when the following circumstance occurred, and put every poetical idea out of my head for the rest of the season. I had been roaming, on one occasion, for many hours, in search of the Beautiful, and thoroughly tired and wet-footed, was luxuriating in the idea of a warm bath; for they *had* a warm bath in the hotel at Kilmurdoch, although it was not a very good one. It was wanted but 'little' in the establishment, and I should say, from personal experience, that it was not wanted 'long.' It was situated in a sort of passage where four doors (and four drafts) met, through which bare-footed maidens, from scullery and kitchen, might pass at any moment, and did it. Being an Englishman of retiring manners, I insisted upon locking all these doors, although I believe the whole current of communication within the house was thereby disturbed, —the continuity, as the electricians have it, broken—by my isolation of that bath-chamber. I think so, because of the manifold attempts which were made to procure a free transit during the progress of my undressing, and on account of the difficulty I had of drawing the line of propriety, beyond which no trespass should be made; Scotch manners being as much less fastidious in these matters, as their habits are shorter. At last, however, having declared myself in a state of siege, and declined to admit any one, I proceeded to take my ease in my bath.

'Talk about cold water,' I soliloquised, presenting only my nose and my mouth above the steaming surface; 'give me the water at 90 degrees;' and if I had not been afraid of turning on the cold supply instead of the hot one—for there was nothing in the Kilmurdoch apparatus to tell me which was which—I would have made it warmer still. There was the customary rope, however, depending over my head, with a charming little brazen ring at the end of it like a parrot's perch; and there was also some clumsy-looking machine above it, whose nature I did not comprehend, and which, in my dreamy state of contentment, I did not care to investigate. Presently, when I had had enough of lying, Sabrina-like, beneath the pleasant wave, I thought I would swing by the perch, by way of exercise. I was obliged to raise my neck and shoulders out of the warm water for this purpose; and then I put forth my hand to reach the ring, when, as I did so—suffocation, iciness, hail-stones, a volley of thunder, and paralysis both physical and mental, supervened simultaneously. I held on grimly and unconsciously to this abominable and evilly magic ring until the last drop of that cold shower-bath was emptied upon my devoted body. But I protest, during the first twenty minutes of it—the torrent must have lasted for hours, and the machine have contained water enough for a night's toddy for all Kilmurdoch—I thought it was the end of the world!

THE NEW SOCIAL-SCIENCE VOLUME.*

The Social Science Conference has brought out its second volume, being the transactions of the meeting at Liverpool in October last. We have had so much concern in the social improvements of the last twenty-five years—may we not in all humility say, had some share in originating them—particularly the sanitary movement?—that we cannot refrain from expressing our delight in seeing so goodly a proof of the extended interest felt in these subjects. Here are some of the foremost men of the land—Lord Brougham, Lord John Russell, the Bishop of Chester, the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Earl of Carlisle, Sir James Stephen—pouring themselves out in earnest eloquent addresses on questions affecting the practical good of the public. Here is a great range of lesser, but intelligent and cultivated men, coming together, each with his modicum of facts, observations, suggestions, illustrating what is done or doing for practical improvements, or pointing the way to further advances of the like nature. We may surely begin to augur something for the cause of true civilisation, when we see such a concentration of enlightened and disinterested effort taking shape from year to year amongst us.

In our narrow limits, we can but propose to cull a few flowers out of this valuable volume—though it is no easy matter to so restrict ourselves.

We learn from the address of Mr W. Cowper, M.P., that, while large means of education have been of late years provided in England, there are nevertheless 2,262,000 children, between the ages of three and fifteen, who are not at school, the greater number being absent without any necessity or justification. The great evil is declared by another observer—and we must give our full accord to the remark—to be the indifference of parents. Mr Cowper points to the centre of Europe, from the Baltic to the Adriatic, where, under every variety of government, there is a compulsory education of from six to eight years for all children. Why should not such a system, under certain, perhaps necessary, modifications be adopted for England? One thing we can tell our country—a democratic reform of the House of Commons, without an education for the entire community, will be something of a solecism, and one not likely to be attended with pleasant consequences.

Sir James Stephen gives an address on emigration, perhaps the most philosophical effusion in the volume. He reckons among the benefits of having colonies, that we have in them at least firmer allies than in other states. They are also the best customers. In 1856, the ships entering our ports from and for our colonies, were so numerous, that, 'if brought together on any one average day of the 365, they would have formed a fleet of 197 sail,' and, 'on any such average day, their cargoes were of the value of L.280,000 and upwards.' The emigration from Ireland in 1847 and seven following years exceeded 1,700,000. Out of terrible calamities have sprung 'fruits for which the sufferers themselves, the land of their birth, and the land of their adoption, should all join in one glad chorus of grateful adoration. Of those adopted lands,' Sir James goes on to say, 'and of the reception of the sufferers in them, the parliamentary witnesses drew pictures usually attractive, and sometimes even fascinating. Some of them extolled the invigorating climate and the cordial society of Eastern Canada; some celebrated the unrivalled fertility of the Upper Province; some dwelt on the exhaustless capital and demand for labour in the United States; and some on the perpetual spring, the interminable pastures, and the mineral wealth of Australia. There were witnesses who graphically described the Irish emigrants as, touching the western shores of the Atlantic, they leaped at once from wages of half-a-crown to wages of a guinea and a half by the week. Others exhibited domestic dramas, of which the half-cleared wilderness was the scene, the Irish emigrant the hero, and a seat in some municipal or provincial council the splendid catastrophe. Many celebrate the fact that, in the person of the redoubted General Jackson, the presidential chair of the United States was filled by the son of such an emigrant. With one voice they all bear testimony to the thrift, sobriety, and diligence, and to the state of comfort in which the emigrants were living. Mr Godley assigns to them three daily meals of butcher's-meat, and clothing like that of a thriving farmer in the West Riding. But Count Strelezki reaches the climax—"In the United States, in Canada, and in Australia," he says, "I saw the Irish living as well as the Anglo-Saxons, acquiring their grumbling habits, and thus continually improving their condition!" Think of O'Connell's "hereditary bondsman," "close-buttoned to the chin—broad cloth without, and a warm heart within," grumbling over his sirloin at the hardness of the times, and fattening as he growls! And warm indeed were the hearts of those noble exiles. We know something, and have all heard much of Irish eloquence; but neither Burke nor Sheridan, Plunkett nor Grattan, Curran nor O'Connell, has left behind him anything so moving as some of the letters laid before parliament, in which the Irish in Canada invited their kindred at home to join them there. To their grammar and spelling, indeed, belongs only the praise of a bare originality; but the tenderness and the pathos, the gracefulness and the gaiety, the quiet humour and the homely wisdom, with which they address themselves to *their* deserted villages, bespeak them at once as genuine members of the land, and as pure scions of the stock of Oliver Goldsmith. Nor was theirs a mere lip-rhetoric. Their invitations were accompanied and enforced by pecuniary remittances, which were made partly through private hands, of whose receipts nothing is publicly known, but chiefly through the greater commercial firms and banking-houses of Ireland, who, on accounts spontaneously transmitted to the government, debited themselves with receipts which, in the ten years beginning in 1848 and ending in 1857, amounted—they to whom the fact is new will scarcely hear it without incredulity—to L.9,937,000. Thus the remittances made by the Irish emigrants to their families at home from the savings of these ten years, far exceeded the ten millions granted by parliament for the relief of Ireland. Never was a debt more magnificently repaid or more nobly cancelled. Our ten millions ten times told would have been well repaid if it had made us no other return than the knowledge that such are the hearts that are beating in the bosoms of our Irish fellow-countrymen. Where, in the annals of mankind, will you find such another proof of the devotedness of a whole people to the sacred charities of home?'

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* *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science*, 1858. Edited by George W. Hastings, LL.B. London: Parker. 1859.

As a variety upon this passage, take Professor Pillans's remark on the way in which history is too often taught in schools. 'History has been well defined, Philosophy teaching by example; but to give the examples without the philosophy, is to reverse the order of nature. For until reason and reflection enable us to draw from history the lessons which it teaches, and to enlarge the sphere of our own experience, by being introduced to scenes in the drama of human life, which occasionally elevate and encourage, but more frequently admonish and warn, and impress us with a humiliating sense of the weakness and the wickedness of former ages—till we can reap such fruits, what is history but a catalogue of the crimes and follies and miseries of our race? Of what use can it be to crowd the child's memory with the minute details of these—with dates and descriptions of battles, the exact number of the killed and wounded on both sides, the lineal descent of all the foolish kings and ferocious tyrants who have afflicted humanity, the day and year they were born and died, and the length of their disastrous reigns? There is, indeed, a way of culling the flowers of history which might agreeably and profitably follow geographical preparation, before the close of the ninth year. The bright points of man's history may be dwelt upon—the biography of great men who, by their intellectual feats, have impressed a character on the age; notices of discoveries and inventions which have improved the condition of mankind; while the dreary wastes of chronology are passed lightly over.'

There is much of a cheering nature from Lord Carlisle, Mr M. D. Hill, Captain Crofton, and others, on the reformation of criminals. Good results from the recent efforts in Ireland continue to be shewn. We have a paper from Mr W. Bayne Ranken, giving an account of a society for the aid of discharged prisoners—a perfectly indispensable adjunct to all efforts at the restoration of convicts to a sphere of honest industry. 'With very few exceptions, the society has received most satisfactory accounts of the well-doing of both the men and women it has been instrumental in gaining employment for, and the loans advanced have almost in every instance been repaid.' On the other hand, Mr Monckton Milnes reports of an Industrial Home for Discharged Prisoners at Wakefield, that, during two years, of 343 persons admitted, 95 have left without assigning any reason, 73 have been discharged for misconduct, 36 left, having objections to the regulations, 34 to seek employment, while only 67 have been passed from the home into profitable employment elsewhere. It is a remark of more importance than at first sight appears, that it is easier to replace a convict in society in Ireland than in England. 'The sanguine and cheerful elements in the Irish character are no doubt very favourable to the recovery of a lost position in society, and the law, in that portion of the empire, has not always possessed the force and popular concert which here causes its infringement to entail such life-long consequences.'

There is a laborious paper by Dr Farr on the influence of marriage on the mortality of the French people. We learn that there is considerably less mortality among the married than the single; that between twenty and forty, the mortality of wives is greater than that of husbands, but less at subsequent ages, though not in a great degree; and that 'at all ages widows are more mortal than wives.' It strikes us that one all-sufficient reason for the superior viability of the married is, that they are generally a selection of the comparatively healthy, and do not, as a rule, comprehend so many soldiers, criminals, fatuous persons, and others, who are peculiarly exposed to the causes destructive of life.

The obstacles to sanitary reform are unfortunately very great. It is found that the rural labourer in England cannot afford a cottage fit for the perfect maintenance of health: if he gets one, it must be partly at the expense of his landlord or employer. The building of improved houses for the labouring-classes in towns evidently is not a tempting speculation to builders or capitalists, for it is not entered upon by them, and has only as yet been tried by philanthropists. The Rev. Charles Kingsley, in treating this subject, adverts to the class of owners of property occupied by the poor, as one having an interest in keeping things as they are, and whom nothing but a rigorous system of inspection can control. But how can this be attained? The low property-owners form no small element of that order who chiefly affect elections, and who are the only one now thoroughly represented. 'Their prejudices, superstitions, pride, and theirs alone, must be courted by the man who desires to become a senator; while the man of science or of scholarship, who could and would do battle against our social evils, has practically little more voice in the legislation of the country than the working-man who suffers from those evils, whose children, and too often he himself, are the victims of preventable disease, or of lingering weakness and misery engendered by an atmosphere to which we would not expose our dogs and horses.'

As it does not seem to admit of a doubt that the system of distribution by retail shop-keeping is a cumbrous and expensive one—there being more house-property, and that of a finer kind, and more human beings, employed in it, than are necessary—while the competition unavoidably induces adulteration of goods and other evils—much interest attaches to all rational efforts at a system which shall be more economic. The Rochdale co-operative stores and the Leeds flour-mills are great facts. We here find an account of a very modest, and as yet infantine association for such objects, in Liverpool. In 1851, it had but 34 members, and kept its stores in a press; in 1857, it had 475 members, and had a store constantly open under proper officers, with two branch-establishments. The business for seven years has amounted to L.17,115. 'Articles of food and clothing have been secured to the members, of a better quality than could have been obtained at the average retail-shop. Weight and measurement have also been secured, together with protection of the ignorant in their purchases, especially of articles of wearing apparel. These advantages have been obtained at a payment for each article of not more than the average shop-price.'

The providing of innocent amusement for the people, in antagonism to the usually sole entertainment offered by the public-house, is one of the important problems of our age, and we find here some notice, from Mr Samuel Taylor, of what appears as a very hopeful effort at its solution. At Hanley, in the midst of the dense industrial population of the *Potteries*, there are now, twice a week, Literary and Musical Entertainments for the People, lasting about two hours each, and consisting of readings from good authors, alternated by the performances of a band. They are so attractive that great difficulty has been experienced in providing sufficient accommodation for the audience. 'At first, admission was free, the funds being supplied by a few friends to popular improvement. But one evening a working-man from the body of the hall arose, and voluntarily proposed that an admission-fee of one penny should be charged in future. This proposition was received with acclamation, and carried most enthusiastically; and thus, by the act of the people themselves, the entertainments were made self-supporting, for the small sum charged proved sufficient to defray all expenses, and leave a balance in the hands of the treasurer at the end of each session.' Latterly, the plan has been followed in other towns with equal success. 'The literary and musical staff has consisted, in many instances, of persons who, heretofore, have confined the exercise of their talents to the drawing-room; while the amount and quality of musical acquirements amongst the working-class, developed during the proceedings, were both surprising and gratifying. The deep and active interest which persons of all conditions have taken in these entertainments, and the support rendered to them by the clergy of the Church of England, and ministers of all denominations, are not only a guarantee for their future success, but indicate their high moral tendency, and the great desire all classes have to meet together to participate in pleasures which all can share free from political differences and sectarian animosities. Wealthy manufacturers have been seen reading to their workmen, and the delicately trained and accomplished lady has thrown aside reserve, and played and sung to her humbler neighbours; and the people have repaid with interest such instances of kindness by the propriety of their demeanour, and by the most grateful demonstrations.'

Mr Taylor adds the important result, that about twenty music saloons connected with public-houses have fallen before this well-conducted effort. 'Great numbers who have been accustomed to seek recreation at such places, have been remarkable for their regular and punctual attendance at these entertainments, and the marked attention they have paid to the proceedings. Whole families belonging to the working-classes attended them regularly, and husbands and fathers, accustomed to seek amusement in haunts of vice, have learned how great and pure is the pleasure arising from innocent yet cheerful recreation, shared in common with their wives and families.'

MY THREE WOOINGS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

It was a most unjustifiable proceeding! I can say nothing in extenuation of my conduct; nothing even to qualify it; but since confessions are the fashion, I will 'make a clean breast of it,' and relate the whole story, trusting it may prove at least a warning-voice to the few—for I hope there are not many—who have been placed in my strange position—that of the accepted lover of three charming girls at the same time!

Yes, fair reader, you may well shake those silken curls at me; such was the astounding fact.

It was long ago—I will not say how long ago, for I am not going to narrate my whole history; only such passages of it as are connected with what has been defined as 'an episode in the life of man, though it forms the whole history of woman.'

The daughter of my private tutor was my first love.

Where is the man who did not fall in love with the daughter of his private tutor? always supposing he had a private tutor, and that private tutor had a daughter.

Her name was Rose May, and she was like a May-rose, so fresh, so fair, so blooming, so artless.

Of course, all her father's 'young men' fell in love with her; she was used to that; and it was not only her vanity that was flattered by my attentions. Attentions? That was an odd word, for they only consisted in my inattention to everything else. It was no use carving her name upon the trees; I found they were all scored over with it already. It was no use sending her valentines; Dr May saw all her letters. It was no use playing the flute, nor even the key-bugle, for she said she did not like music, though her voice, when she taught the school-children their Hundredth Psalm and their Evening Hymn, was as sweet as St Cecilia's might have been. At last, I found a way to her heart.

Rose was fond of sketching from nature, and so was I. It is true that the gable-ends of her roofs were wandering upward and downward in search of some unknown vanishing-point; and her chimneys had a trick of looking over into their neighbours' windows, like the leaning tower of Pisa; but I gave her some hints about this, and was soon installed her drawing-master.

This insured me many a pleasant stroll with her; and I cut her pencils, and carried her book; and we often sat and looked at the same oak-tree without much progress in its outline. At last I made a discovery.

I took up a drawing-book which I was not intended to see; it was snatched out of my hands, and the May-rose became a blush-rose on the spot; but I gained my point at last. I opened the book, and there were indubitable proofs that the talent of my lovely pupil lay not in gables and in oak-trees, but in portraits. There was I myself, in a variety of attempts, the cravat particularly elaborated; but the profile could not be mistaken (reader, I have an aquiline nose): the nostril was left out altogether; the eye but faintly indicated, though there were long eyelashes, like stitches in netting, round it; the hair made one think of the 'ancient thatch upon the lonely moated grange;' but still it was my hair; and the eyebrow unmistakable.

I turned to the May-rose in unspeakable happiness. I am not sure what I did—whether I kissed my own portrait or her hand, or fell on my knees; but I know that soon after we were engaged—irrevocably engaged. She was sixteen; I was eighteen. We knew our own minds perfectly; we had gone through this bleak world alone, unloving and unloved, except by a few fathers and mothers, and maiden aunts; we had found the one only being who could understand and appreciate us—we loved; we were betrothed.

I went to Oxford, and passed wretched years in anguish and suspense, occasionally relieved by boating, driving coaches—there were coaches in those days—hunting, wine-parties, and a very little reading. I went through my little go creditably. My only wish in life was to have a tolerable living, which my father would purchase for me, and marry the May-rose.

I have promised not to write an autobiography, and will only touch lightly and briefly on what was anything but a light matter to me: my father failed in some mining speculations just about the time I was to leave college. I had no prospect then of his being able to purchase a living for me; and my dreams of a parsonage and the May-rose grew fainter.

My uncle, the general, took a fancy, though a very precarious one, to me. I went down, at his invitation, to his place in Hampshire. The fancy took root, and flourished. I wonder at it, for I went with a thorough determination to contradict him in everything, lest he should suppose I wanted to curry favour with him. He had made his fortune in India, in the days when fortunes were made there; and he was bent upon one of two things—either that I should accept a writership and go to Madras, or marry his ward, Justina Warner, who was to have three thousand a year, and was just seventeen.

Of course, I resolved to do neither; and in order to clench the matter, finding Miss Warner was expected at the Birches, asked on purpose to meet me, I immediately wrote a most pathetic epistle to the May-rose, accompanied with a turquoise and pearl-ring in the shape of a 'forget-me-not,' renewing my vows of unchangeable fidelity. To this I received a tender reply, written on pink paper, with a stamped border, which found its home in my left waistcoat-pocket; and what delighted me more was a lock of her exquisite fair hair, and a heart's-ease ring, which just fitted my little finger, where I forthwith installed it.

Alas! was it the presentiment of danger that made me thus barricade my heart and guard my hand with that little special constable of a heart's-ease ring? I know not, but I felt that I should be violently attacked by the said Justina Warner, especially as my uncle, who was enthusiastic in her praise, described her as 'a splendid girl;' such a horsewoman! Just see her ride Sky-rocket across country, that's all; stops at nothing. Then such a mimic; so clever, she takes off people to their faces. And as to caricatures!'—— Here he ended in an admiring laugh, which quite abashed me by anticipation.

The May-rose softly blushed upon my imagination in contrast to this hoyden; and I pressed the hand with the ring on its little finger fervently on my left waistcoat-pocket containing the pink letter.

Justina came. Directly the ringing of gate bells, clapping of doors, lifting of trunks, and other notes of arrival, assailed me, I rushed out into the shrubbery —'into the free air' as I called it; but it was not free to me, for there I met my uncle, with a very red face, hurrying in to receive her. He gasped out: 'Where are you off to, you young scapegrace? Don't you know Justina's come?'

I was turned back like a whipped hound, and followed my uncle to the back-door by which he was entering; there, however, I saw a way of escape—the back-stairs which led to my bedroom. Regardless of consequences, I rushed up the steps, overturning a pail and mop in my way, reached my room without further accident, bolted the door, and threw myself on a chair, literally panting with the sense of escape.

My room looked towards the back of the house into the stable-yard. I could not make up my mind to face the formidable Miss Warner at luncheon, and waited till I trusted she would be disposed of, either to go out with my uncle, or retire to her own room; so I remained where I was, beguiling the time with the dear little pink letter, which I had by heart, and thinking of the dear little writer. Suddenly I heard my uncle's voice close under my window; a groom was called, and desired to bring out a newly purchased horse, to shew Miss Warner.

'O no; I'd much rather go in and look at him,' said a high, clear, but not unpleasing voice. 'Besides, I want to see all my old friends. How's Sky-rocket, Thomas? Where do the H. H. hounds meet this week? General, are you up to a run, or will you only ride with me to see the meet? I hope you won't send that nephew of yours with me instead, because I have a strong presentiment that he is a spoon.'

My uncle laughed long and loud, then said: 'No, no; not quite that; but he certainly wants you to put a little life into him. He is a nice lad enough.'

'A nice lad! O yes, I can just fancy. I suppose he walks out by moonlight, and always shuts the door softly, and sits with his feet under his chair, and says: "Yes indeed" and "you don't say so!" A regular muff, I dare say. But where are the pointer puppies? I must see them first, and then the new horse.'

Here the conversation took a canine turn, and relieved my angry blushes. I was violently incensed; indeed, in the agitation of the moment, I actually tore in pieces the precious pink letter I had in my hand. This misfortune rather calmed my feelings—on the principle of counter-irritation, I suppose, for I was much annoyed to lose the valued relic. I got out my desk, and sat down to write to the May-rose, but somehow or other, I could not get on. There was every now and then a loud, but very merry, and not unmusical laugh under my window, that disturbed me, and I began to wonder what this virago looked like. I hated her most intensely, and the very hatred gave me an interest in her.

I began several sheets to the May-rose, and found, that after writing, 'Dearest and loveliest Rose,' or 'Sweetest and fairest Rose,' &c., I had nothing to say to her, but to relate the incidents of Miss Warner's arrival. I tore up the letter in disgust, at my own stupidity, and began to think it only wanted an hour of dinner, and then I could not avoid meeting the detestable Miss Warner. For that hour, I continued my voluntary captivity, afraid of encountering the enemy, if I went out; but I employed the time in selecting what I considered to be the most knowing-looking of my cravats and waistcoats.

I never had bestowed so much time and thought upon my dress before; yet it was not so much the wish to please, as the fear of ridicule. I wondered, as I never did before, whether my long straight hair did not really give me a 'spooney' look, and whether a green or a purple waistcoat might not make me look pale and 'moonstruck.' A white cravat I entirely avoided, for having sported one at Dr May's on a grand occasion, Rose had said—though this was before we were engaged—that it made me look like a footman.

At last the second bell rung, and in spite of all I could do, my heart beat violently, and I felt my cheeks flush as I entered the drawing-room. To my horror and consternation, Justina was there alone. I felt so utterly dismayed, that my first impulse was to retreat, and shut the door again; but in doing this, in my confusion, I shut in the paw of a Skye terrier that had followed me into the room. Nettle began to howl; Miss Warner flew to the rescue, seated herself on the floor, and began to soothe the whining animal, and examine the wounded foot. This she did without taking the slightest notice of me, who stood by rather sulkily, feeling as if I ought to apologise, and yet, as it was my own dog, I did not see why I should, unless I did so to Nettle, who was certainly the aggrieved party.

'You are giving yourself a great deal of trouble,' said I, feeling I *must* say something. 'He is not much hurt.'

'You might have broken his leg, and perhaps you have,' she said, still intent on the dog. 'I never saw anything so awkward. Why could you not have come in at once, and not taken fright at me?'

'I? I was looking for my uncle,' said I, much abashed; 'otherwise I should'——

'Nonsense! Tell the truth at once, if you wish to please *me*.'

How I longed to tell her I did not wish to please her, but had not courage!

'There, you darling little pet, you'd tell the truth if you could speak, wouldn't you? Is it your dog? What's its name? You don't deserve such a dear dog, and not to care whether you crush it to death or not! I wish you'd give it to me; I have taken a great fancy to the dog.'

Here was a poser! Give her my dog? I would as soon give her my heart and hand—and I mentally resolved on seeing her go through a very unpleasant process indeed, before I did *that*. Give her Nettle? Why, I could not make up my mind to give the dog to Rose, though I knew she would have liked it above all things. She always said it was 'a duck.' I uttered not a word; and Nettle, who had left off howling, and was now licking his wounded foot and Miss Warner's hand alternately, still sat in her lap, looking up to me and wagging his tail occasionally, in a forgiving manner.

At this juncture, in came my uncle, and the butler followed him to announce dinner.

'What's the matter now?' said he, stopping opposite to Justina, who sat close to the door, Turkish fashion, with the dog in her lap.

'Nothing at all, general,' said she, rising with graceful ease, and still holding Nettle in her arms. 'This poor dog has been hurt in the door; and as a recompense for my skill in doctoring him, your nephew has been so polite as to give him to me. Is not that good-natured?'

She said this with an air of such genuine delight, and my uncle looked so pleased with me, as he said: 'Upon my word, then, I suppose you have made acquaintance without me?' that I was again tongue-tied, and of course my silence was acquiescence. It was quite a relief to me when seated at dinner with the lights—for I had scarcely had a sight of Miss Warner's features in the dusk of the drawing-room—it was quite a relief to me, that she was *not* pretty. She was small, and slight, and exquisitely formed; her eyes were magnificent—dark hazel, with long black lashes; her hair as dark as night, but its thick tresses were carelessly arranged, and did not shew off the really beautiful shape of her head; her complexion was that of a brunette; her mouth too large for beauty, though her teeth were like pearls: in short, she was one of those women who do not strike at first, but grow into beauty as you learn them by heart. Some might call her plain, and some few might think her beautiful. I was determined to think her detestable, and to give her no encouragement; but as the dinner and evening proceeded without her appearing to take the least notice of me, I was at a loss how to manifest my intention.

The general was bent upon drawing out her talents and accomplishments, shewing her caricatures, and making her sing. She sung admirably; and though I appeared entirely absorbed in the *Hampshire Mercury*, and though my uncle's favourite songs were not mine, yet I could not help feeling a charm in them.

To Justina's singing I was determined to act the 'deaf adder;' but it was no use—the spell was on me: it was *music*, not this song or that, which she sung. There was something in the perfectly trained, though not powerful voice, that gave a promise, a security to the ear that it would not be wounded. It was music that seemed to vibrate to some chord within me—it was music that made me feel almost as if I were singing it myself, so perfectly in unison did it seem with my inner being. I had leaned back in my armchair, and concealed my face with the newspaper. Justina, peeping over the top of her music-book, I suppose, thought me asleep, and half in merriment, half in mortification, suddenly clattered down the music-book upon the keys, making a tremendous orchestral crash. The newspaper dropped from before my eyes, in my sudden start at the shock. Justina saw that I was actually in tears; there was no time to conceal the fact. The general laughed, Justina did not; she looked very red, and very much astonished and disconcerted, and sat at the piano without attempting to pick up her book or resume her playing.

'I—I beg your pardon,' she said, quite humbly.'

'Pardon! Indeed, I should think so,' said the general, 'for shocking our nerves in that way.'

'Well, I won't do so any more,' she said, rising from the piano, and giving an odd, inquiring look at me.

'Do you mean to say that you won't sing any more?' said I, eagerly starting up. 'Oh, you must—you will.' I had risen, and was assisting her to replace the music-book.

'I had no idea you were so fond of music,' she said in a low voice, quite unlike her former manner. 'I thought you disliked it.'

'And that was the reason you played and sung, then?'

'Yes.'

'Well, then, think I dislike it still, and go on playing and singing.'

'Are there any songs you particularly—dislike?'

'Yes; but if you sing them—as I suppose you would, if I name them—I should be sure to like them.' Here she jumped up from the piano, and clapped her hands, running up to my uncle.

'General, general, why did we not have a bet? A compliment; your nephew has actually paid me a compliment—given me his dog, and paid me a compliment. Is not that pretty well for the first day's work?' I was utterly confounded and exasperated.

'Bold, vain, conceited coquette,' thought I; 'but no more worth a serious moment's consideration than a musical snuff-box, which I shall make play for my amusement.'

Let the reader experienced in such matters, which I confess is not even now my case, imagine a succession of such scenes for a fortnight. I was by degrees occupied, interested, curious, piqued, provoked, mortified, flattered, and finally, captivated. Yes, reader with the dark braids and soft eyes, do not look up reproachfully: it was a fact. Of course, it is needless to assure you that I did not succumb without a struggle; the final and conquering blow was given by the appearance of a rival.

My uncle, the general, was too much of an old soldier to encourage any such poachers on his own estate, but there was a county ball, from which Miss Warner would not be absent I had grown by this time to think her not only pretty, but absolutely beautiful. There was a variety in her dress, her looks, and her humour, that did not seem design, but a kind of adorable caprice, that was quite enchanting. She never did, or said, or looked, as you expected she would.

At this ball there were officers from Winchester, and dandies from London, and squires and eldest sons from the neighbourhood. Miss Warner was known as a fortune, as a capital horsewoman, as a beautiful waltzer, as a wit, and as 'capital fun.' It was not the fashion to call her a beauty; yet, when she came out, looking her best, and perfectly well dressed, people were surprised into saying, she was 'quite pretty' to-night. How often an established beauty, one shade paler than usual, is thought 'looking quite plain!'

Well, this was one of Justina's triumphal nights. She was in white, with scarlet pomegranate blossoms in her dark hair, and looping up her dress. I could not waltz, and suffered an unknown and intense torture in seeing Justina whirled past me in the arms of one man after another through the dance. She evidently seemed to enjoy it.

'Don't you dance?' said she to me, during a pause. 'You have not asked *me*. But perhaps you would like to be introduced to some other girls.'

'I do not dance,' said I, with dignity; 'and I despise every one, every *man*, at least, that does.' Her partner here claimed her, and she was again whirled away.

'So Sir William Rycroft is caught at last!' said a sharp feminine voice in the circle near me.

'Yes, so they say,' was the response; 'and a lucky man, too. Rich as he is, and a young baronet, he was looking out for money.'

'But what has Miss Warner? She is much too pretty for an heiress,' said the other voice.

I knew that it was Sir William Rycroft, who was then in the heat of a *deux-temps* with Justina. I watched them with the eye of a hawk. The dance was over, and he was leading her to the supper-room; she turned her head, as if looking for some one. I thought it was for her temporary chaperon, Lady Rycroft, mother of the baronet; but she still looked about till she glanced at me. Her cheek flushed, and she gave me an unmistakable sign to come to her. I advanced coldly and doubtingly. 'O Gerald!' she exclaimed—this was the first time she had ever called me by my Christian name, and it thrilled me like the music of her songs—'where is the General? I so particularly wish you would take me to him—can you?' She almost placed her arm within mine, as she withdrew from the discomfited baronet. He could only bow acquiescence, and look daggers and pistols at me. As soon as we had left him, she said: 'Pray, forgive my familiar address just now. I saw you looked horrified at my calling you "Gerald."'

'No, Justina,' said I; 'not in the least. I am never surprised at any caprice in you.'

'Thank you. But it was not entirely caprice; it was to get rid of that man. I thought you would allow me *for once* to take the liberty of using your name.'

'Why, they say you are engaged to him, and I have seen you dance with him all the evening.'

'What was I to do if nobody else danced?'

'Everybody asked you.'

'Well, and I danced with everybody; and now I have done—I don't mean to dance any more.'

'I was in hopes you would once, one dull quadrille with me.'

'Why did you not ask me, then? I thought you despised dancing.'

'I only hate those that dance with you.'

The quadrille was forming, and we stood up. She was in no haste to find the general, and never had she so fascinated me. Sir William came up again to take her to supper, and he looked bitterly mortified when she coolly refused.

'You are scarcely polite to him,' said I magnanimously.

'I did not intend it. His mother has most impertinently made his proposals to me, and he has taken it for granted they were accepted; so I have set him down and given him his answer; and I wish to goodness, Gerald, you could waltz, and then I should not have any trouble; but to refuse a man point-blank, and then let him clasp one round the waist, is rather awkward.'

'And if I had been able to waltz?'

'Why, then, of course, I should have waltzed with no one else.'

This 'of course' both bewildered and enchanted me. I sat next her at supper—a regular country-ball sitting-down supper. The general was opposite, and her chaperon, Lady Rycroft, completely distanced. I don't know how many glasses of champagne I drank, but I made several puns, and felt witty enough to have written *Vanity Fair*. Then came a sentimental fit, and I quoted Byron, and swore 'there were none of Beauty's daughters with a magic like *her*,' and that she walked in beauty like the night. I have a suspicion that I must have said something even more tender and 'compromising' still.

Instead of laughing at all this, as was her wont, Justina received it with an air of beatitude; and just as we were making our way to the cloak-room—the general following discreetly in the rear, she said in a low voice: 'You have made me so very, very happy, Gerald, this evening, I must tell you so.'

'Is it possible?' said I, venturing to press the little hand resting on my arm. 'How so?'

'Oh, of course you know what I mean; only you men are such tyrants—you will never be satisfied without making us acknowledge our slavery.'

'What can slavery have to do with you—and me; unless, indeed'—— and here I floundered for a compliment.

'Oh, spare yourself the trouble of telling me you are my slave, when all the time, you only wanted to make me yours.'

'What can you mean?'

'O pretty innocence! Why, I mean, if it must out, that it makes me ten thousand times happier to find, after all, you—you love me, in spite of yourself, and though you were determined to hate me, than if you had come prepared to make love *aux beaux yeux de ma cassette*, like all the other men. I was just as resolved to dislike you too; and yet you see.'

How could I interrupt her otherwise than by again pressing the little hand!

She went on: 'But, Gerald, you must not think me very strange and bold (I dare say, you do, though, already!) if I give you one hint: I shall be obliged to tell the general immediately about Sir William Rycroft, as he will be sure to hear of it. I expect to be terribly blamed, unless—unless you or I tell him also what has passed to-night: he is sure to be delighted at *that*, you know.'

She said this in a hurried, agitated manner. I scarcely know what I said in answer; I was again taken for granted. The general joined us almost immediately, and we stepped into the carriage for a long drive home, which was effectually a *tête-à-tête*, as the general was fast asleep very soon; and as Justina leaned forward to talk to me in whispers, and allowed me to hold her hand in mine, I forgot everything but herself and her strange unexpected confessions, that she had liked me from the very first, though she had been quite determined not to do so.

As soon as we arrived, I hastened to my room, not venturing to encounter the general. In the morning, however, I was doomed: he was alone in the breakfast-room when I came down. I quite longed to see Justina also, but she did not appear. Anything would have been better than an explanation with him. He began by clapping my back, shaking my hands, poking my ribs, and every English equivalent to an embrace—calling me 'Lucky dog,' 'Sly fox,' and other congratulatory epithets. At last I gained courage to ask him what he meant.

'Mean! Why, what the devil do *you* mean?'

I muttered something about a mistake, and that Miss Warner must have misunderstood me. I will not attempt to describe the explosion that followed, which subsided into the question: 'Do you mean to say, then, you won't have her?'

I could not answer 'No;' I blushed every shade from red to purple, but I could not say 'No.' I thought of the May-rose, and a curacy; I felt in my waistcoat-pocket for the pink letter, no longer there; I looked at the turquoise ring, but I did not say 'No.' 'What a fool the boy is!' said my uncle with an almost hysterical laugh of relief. 'You put me quite in a fright by your confounded shyness.'

With these words, he left me; and while I was revolving some means of escape, I saw Justina's little blood-mare, and the horse I usually rode, led up to the door ready for mounting; and she herself came flying down stairs in hat and habit, a remarkably becoming dress to her, while her clear voice sounded through the spacious hall: 'Gerald! Gerald! are you not ready?'

So I found myself taken for granted again; and against my will, or rather without my will, was soon cantering down the lane by her side, as usual. At first, I resolved to be so sulky that she should be obliged to ask me for an explanation; then I would confess all about the May-rose, and throw myself on her mercy; but nothing of this happened. I could not but be flattered by the change in her manner: all her pert flippancy had disappeared—she was all gentleness and winning softness; so I put off my confession till we turned back. 'When we get upon the downs,' said I to myself. But on the downs we had a gallop; and she had a fight with the little mare, to make her leap over a furze-bush, which incident we talked of as we rode home. I waited in vain for an *à propos* to the May-rose. 'Well,' thought I, 'I am determined to speak as soon as we get into the turnip-field.' In the turnip-field, however, out flew a covey of partridges, which made us both devoutly wish we had guns. I began some bitter remarks upon the cruelty of the wish in her, and my horror of sporting-ladies in general. Instead of being affronted, as I hoped, she said, with great sweetness: 'O Gerald, I shall give up all that sort of thing now. It is just *that* which makes me so sure you really like me, that I am—now, don't deny it—exactly the reverse of all your notions of what "lovely woman" ought to be.'

'I don't intend to deny it.'

'Well, that's candid, at anyrate. Now, describe what your ideal love ought to have been.'

Here was an opportunity. I had nothing to do but paint a flattering likeness of my May-rose—not having a miniature of her in my bosom ready to produce—and boldly declare that was my ideal and my real love—my betrothed. But somehow or other, before we got to the end of the turnip-field, the conversation took another turn, by my admiring the droop of Justina's feather over the broad edge of her hat; and the general on his fat cob coming to meet us, took a load from my heart, as I thought I *must* now put it off till to-morrow.

THE FOE IN THE HOUSEHOLD.

My object in writing this paper is twofold—first, I would wish to disabuse the world as to the real character of a certain race of beings, most unduly valued by the mass of mankind as their natural friends; and secondly, when my case has been considered, I would fain appeal to the sympathies of my pitying reader, and beg for some advice in this my sore distress.

Let me explain the circumstances.

I am a man of a nervous nature, and disposed for a quiet life. I write a good deal for the press, and, besides pen and paper, own as my worldly goods a little house, a little competency, a little but devoted wife, and two little lively children. The same diminutive may also be applied with truth to a peculiarity purely personal—I have, too, as my wife would say, 'a little temper of my own;' but Paulina being now accustomed to it, with all these little advantages we get on, as a general rule, harmoniously enough. What did I say?—*harmoniously?* Alas! for more than a twelvemonth past that word has been a hollow mockery in my house. For the last twelve months our domestic peace has been destroyed, our quiet evenings disturbed, our conjugal affection sorely tried, by a certain grinding, wearing worry, a ceaseless agony of sound, that makes me wish the whole science of acoustics—nay, the very sense of hearing—utterly unknown!

About eighteen months since, Paulina told me one morning that our kitchen-range had become too small for the culinary wants of our increasing household; the boiler did not hold water enough for the wash; the oven would not bake bread enough to last the week; &c., &c. I took the information calmly—though a new range was a matter of some expense—having learned during my marital experience that when Paulina wants anything for the house, it is certainly for my ultimate comfort to give in—those little women are so very determined! Well, soon afterwards she again invaded my study, and, with a beaming face, announced that she had found the very thing in her afternoon's marketing expedition with cook to the neighbouring town.

'Such a bargain, Reggie! and with quite the last improvements: the boiler holds twelve gallons, and there is such a love of an oven! and *so* cheap too.'

'Second-hand is it, Paulina?' I asked, with a warning recollection of divers bargains of my wife's before.

'Yes, dear, second-hand. But just go and see it: there's not a fault in it, cook says. She is quite set on having it, Reggie; and so am I: it's really worth having, my love!'

The range accordingly, after due examination, arrived one fine morning in August, and was fitted into the kitchen fireplace—no easy matter, by the by, for our chimney, country-fashion, is of enormous size, and this range, with quite the last improvements, had been constructed with a view to economise all possible space. However, it was at last fixed in its place, and for several days afterwards I noticed that Paulina made many more visits than usual to the kitchen; on divers pretexts, of course, but really, I knew very well, to admire her new acquisition. Each time she returned overflowing with its praises.

'Oh, Reggie! what do you think?' she exclaimed one day, bursting into my study, whence she had been expelled for talking, half an hour before. 'There is actually a *cricket* come in the new range! Just fancy, love, a dear delightful cricket! Cook has heard it chirping several times, and just now I heard one little note myself.'

'Well, Paulina, what then?' I asked, by no means comprehending her enthusiasm.

'Oh, Reggie, you silly old man! don't you know how lucky it is to have a cricket in the house? Nice merry things! why, a cricket always brings luck, and is such pretty company too:

Little inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my household hearth.

I shall teach Isabelle that pretty piece, Reggie, I think.'

'Don't you think it would be advisable to wait till she can speak, Paulina?' I asked, dryly.

(*N.B.*—Isabelle, our eldest, was then sixteen months old.)

'Oh now, Reggie! she can say "Papa," and "Pretty," and "Ta" already, you know; and, of course, I mean when she is older. But are not you pleased, Reggie, about the cricket in the range?'

'*No*, Paulina—bother the range!' I exclaimed, out of all patience. 'I declare I am heartily sick of the word; but there now, don't look vexed, dear—only you really are so childish about your range and your crickets! Can't you be more of a woman, my dear, and let one alone when one is busy?'

Paulina withdrew with a decided tendency to tears in her eyes; and I, feeling I had been cross, was extra snappish to her all the rest of the day, as was natural. Alas! was not this cloud in our sky, occasioned by the first cricket, a warning of the storms his successors were to bring?

For some months, checked by her last rebuff, my wife carefully avoided all allusion to her kitchen experience. I knew in my heart this must be rather a trial to her, though so decided a relief to myself, that I made no remark. At last, however, I began to observe a certain anxious look in my Paulina's face, which, as the children were quite well, I could not account for. I waited and waited an explanation, but none came, and the worried expression seemed growing habitual. I did not like this, so one evening I determined to ask the cause; and then, with a deep sigh, it all came out.

'Oh, Reggie, I haven't liked to tease you; but I am just worried out of my life! Cook has given me warning; and all the cupboards are full, and my pickles are eaten up, cork and all, and I can't keep a thing for them—and, O dear, what am I to do?'

'My poor little wife! there, don't fret so, darling; come here to me, and tell me all about it. Do you know you are quite incoherent, dear, and I don't know now what is wrong one bit? Come—*who* eats my Paulina's pickles, cork and all; and *what* ails the cook and the cupboards?'

'They are in such multitudes, Reggie,' she sobbed; 'the kitchen-floor is black with them at night, and the noise—the noise is deafening; and'——

'The noise of what?—of the *pickles?* My dear Paulina, do be a little more explicit. Is it the cupboards that are in multitudes? and what can be the matter with the kitchen-floor?'

'Those dreadful *crickets*, Reggie!' But the piteous tone in which the fearful word was uttered, upset my gravity completely.

'Only the crickets, my dear girl? and I thought you liked them so much—such "pretty company," you know! Why, little woman, you really are very inconstant in your affections.'

'Don't laugh, Reggie—now don't, please; indeed, it is not a bit of a joke. The servants won't sit in the kitchen for them, except cook, who must, and she has given warning. Just come and listen yourself.'

I was strongly inclined to laugh at the whole affair; but, seeing she was in earnest, I got up to please her. She led me to the green baize-door which separates the kitchen and back-passages from more civilised parts of the house; and, opening it, finger on lip, whispered: '*Now*, Reggie?'

A sharp continuous squeak reached my ears, like nothing I have ever heard but the sound a toy-bird emits when the leather is squeezed. It went on, repeated and evidently answered by scores of shrill voices of the like kind all round us.

'*Well*, Reggie, dear?' said my wife, when we got back to the quiet dining-room. I thought I detected a certain triumph in her voice and upturned eyes; my manly pride was roused in a moment. I did not immediately see any remedy, so thought it best to make light of the evil.

'Is that all, Paulina?' I asked; 'just that little sound. It is really very needless to annoy yourself about such a mere trifle! Let the poor things be: they can do no kind of harm.'

'But the cook, dear; and'——

'Nonsense, child! the cook's a fool! but manage her yourself, my dear. I never interfere, you know;' and I settled myself again to my paper, despite Paulina's imploring face.

Two days afterwards, I came home wet through; and my careful wife having, of course, coat and slippers warming for me ready, my soaked garments and boots were carried into the kitchen to dry. After breakfast next morning, I rang and asked for these latter needful casings of my lower man. A long delay ensued; then came a knock—'Please, ma'am, you're wanted;' and as a grand finale, Paulina, returning, laid my unhappy boots before me without a word. What a dismal wreck was there! They were a new pair, lacing up the front: each eyelet-hole was eaten away round the brass; the polished fronts were all punctured, dimmed, destroyed. 'How's this, Paulina?' I demanded. 'Mice?'

'No, love; crickets! Jane foolishly left your boots on the kitchen fender all night to get quite dry; and oh, I'm so sorry, dear Reggie; but it's just like *them!*'

I looked ruefully at the ruined articles; L.1, 16s. 6d. they had cost the week before; the mischief did indeed seem to be assuming a more tangible shape. A few nights after, as I sat writing in my study, a faint squeak suddenly issued from the fireplace. Paulina, with a loud scream, started up; seizing the poker, she began to belabour the bricks with all her pigmy strength; a dead silence ensued, and she returned to her seat with a very self-satisfied look at me. I had been watching her efforts with some surprise, and now the truth flashing on me: 'Is it a cricket, my love?' I asked.

'Yes, Reggie; but, thank goodness, I've killed him, I think;' and she glanced towards the fireplace with a new expression dawning in her blue eyes, an expression I had never seen in them before; an expression—shall I say it?—of savage, triumphant cruelty! I was shocked. Could this be my gentle, tender-hearted Paulina?

The squeak began again, but I desired her to sit still. Ah! would she had succeeded in her murderous attempt. From that hour to this, I have had no peace, no comfort in my life. That single cricket has become the patriarch of a nation continually on the increase. From my desecrated hearth, I am become the sport of millions. In the midst of my severest efforts at composition, the strident cries of these hordes of invaders rack and confuse my brain. Voices bewildering, derisive, continuous, distract my mind, and work the throbbing pulses of my weary temples, till thought becomes intolerable, impossible. Nor is my sanctum the only room thus infested; all through the mouldering plaster of the old walls, the indefatigable insects have eaten their way. Drawing-room, dining-room, up stairs, every room in the house has in turn become a prey to these desperate marauders; in the nursery, they swarm in myriads, flying against my children's faces with a heavy *thud*, and frightening them with their long feelers and great, staring eyes.

Against this last invasion, Paulina struggled hard, though of course in vain. Often have I seen her in the small hours of the night, proceed, with stealthy slippered feet, and a jug of boiling water in her hand, to the room where her children were sleeping the sleep of innocence, while swarming multitudes of noisy foes were holding their fiend-like orgies on the darkened floor. Often have I watched her climbing over beds and chairs, to preserve her night-dress from such unholy contact, squirt boiling water into the holes to which some timid spirits had fled on her entrance. I have all this and more. I have seen the wife of my losing every spark of tender womanly feeling in excess of hatred; and can I chide her? No.

to the full in her abhorrence, her loathing aversion. I myself have tried every means I can think of to second her endeavours. Poisons of various kinds have I poked into their holes, or scattered on the floors, insidiously mixing the same with sugar or crumbs of bread—perhaps *thirty* corpses were found next morning; but their companions, warned by their fate, ate no more. And what are thirty dead foes out of thirty thousand?

A kind friend suggested a hedgehog, and I put one in the coal-hole; but whether he was alarmed by the numbers he was required to combat, or pined for his native fields, it is certain that after a few days—during which our foes made more noise than ever—he made his escape one morning, and, hurrying down the road, too bent on flight to be cautious, was overtaken by his fate in the person of an energetic gipsy, who skinned him for eating, on the spot, with many demonstrations of joy. But this is a digression. Hedgehog, traps, and poisons I have thus tried in vain; and now, what *are* we to do? My temper has given way entirely under such repeated disappointments; my nerves can't stand the ceaseless persecution to which they are subjected. I am grown horribly cross to Paulina, peevish to the children, savage to the servants. My literary labours have become impossible; and how are we, then, to live? Must I leave this old house, which I have rent-free from my godfather, and so offend him mortally? and even if, braving his certain displeasure, we should determine to go—among our household stuff, do what we will, *somewhere* a cricket will hide, and go with us.

Good, philanthropic public, I throw myself on your kindness. Help me to a remedy; tell me of some new poison, of some new instrument of death; and oh! warned by my sad example, never, *never* buy a second-hand range 'with quite the last improvements,' and a cricket in the oven!

LECTURES BY A LADY-DOCTOR.

THREE lectures on physiological and medical science, addressed to women, were delivered recently in London by Elizabeth Blackwell, M.D. This circumstance gave an opportunity to such persons as were either curious, sceptical, or otherwise interested in the subject of 'women-doctors,' to hear the cause advocated by one of themselves. We were among the number of the curious, and on Wednesday, 2d March, we found our way to the Marylebone Institute. A goodly company of ladies were already assembled; and among the number were not a few whom the world honours for good work done in literature, art, and, above all, in charitable labour.

After a brief delay, Dr Elizabeth Blackwell entered the room. She stood with quiet dignity on the platform by the desk, while Mrs Jameson read the address which had been presented to her, requesting her to give these lectures. Dr Blackwell was received with a general expression of sympathy. Many of the persons present were fully aware of the almost unexampled difficulties which had attended the prosecution of her singular career—a career which has initiated women to the possibility of a professional study of medicine. A sketch of this lady's life has already appeared in this *Journal*, but to such of our readers as may be unacquainted with the facts, we will briefly give the following particulars.

Elizabeth Blackwell is an *Englishwoman*, and not an American, as some persons have erroneously believed. Her father was a Bristol merchant, much respected in his native city, but, in consequence of commercial embarrassments, he went to America some years since, taking his family with him. He had hoped to re-establish his broken fortunes, but disappointments and early death frustrated these expectations. His family of nine children were left without any other resources than those supplied by endurance and perseverance. After many trials common to their position, two of the sisters conceived the idea of entering the medical prefession. In 1849, Elizabeth Blackwell received her diploma from the president of the Medical College of the University of Geneva, in the state of New York.

In one of her lectures, Dr Blackwell eloquently and feelingly described the privations, the difficulties, the calumnies, which attended her during the prosecution of her studies; but a high interest in the vocation she had adopted, sustained her in her earnest resolve to pioneer the way for an extended sphere of usefulness to women—a sphere in which, under one form or another, they are virtually more or less engaged in already—but for which their education has left them, if not totally unfit, at least very inadequately prepared.

This brings us to the subject touched upon in the first lecture; namely, the utility and importance of physiological knowledge to women generally. Books without number have been written on home-duties and maternal obligations—the *morale* of all this is accepted and unquestioned. One lecturer, with much point, delicacy, and justness of reasoning, demonstrated the fact that physiology is the basis upon which women must found a knowledge of these special duties. We are all aware of the effects of the general health and equanimity of the mother, upon her offspring. We all know that the management of infancy has a direct and sometimes fearful influence upon the future life of the child. And especially while the physical and moral faculties are in progress of development, is the mother's judicious care and direction necessary. Granted, the important function of woman as the guardian of childhood and youth. Now, let us for a moment imagine a person intrusted with a complicated and delicate piece of machinery, which must, and, indeed, *can* only be preserved by constant care and attention. Imagine that person to be ignorant of the principles of the construction of that machine; unobservant of its workings, its powers of application, its possible derangements; unconscious that certain conditions are injurious, and often fatal to its organisation: imagine, we repeat, such a state of things, and what would be the result? The answer is self-evident, and yet that precious thing called *health*—the health not only of individuals, but of families—is in the hands of women whose education has never included even the most elemental knowledge of physiology.

Be it clearly understood that we are now speaking of physiological knowledge in reference to the *preservation* of health; professional aid is sought when remedial efforts are absolutely essential, but how frequently does it not happen that this state of disease is consequent upon want of foresight, want of judgment, want, in fact, of the application of the commonest hygienic principles.

In the savage state, where nature is allowed free play, it is true pharmacy is confined to some few simple herbs, and professorships are not. But we who are living in an artificial condition, are bound to assist nature out of the difficulties with which we ourselves environ her. Dr Blackwell dwelt at some length upon the laws of health, the fitness of the pursuit for feminine study, and the possibility of improving the general standard of health. There is a homely saying: 'It is easier to prevent than cure,' but it is a saying more frequently quoted than practised—so-called 'common sense' is insufficient without a knowledge of principles, and surely that knowledge, without being exclusive or pedantic, might be admitted into the general education of females.

The lecturer dwelt on the benefits likely to arise from the cultivation of the science of physiology. The mental and moral progress is so intimately connected with physical conditions, that no person is worthy the name of educator who does not carefully observe the action and reaction of the mind on the body—the body on the mind. We were reminded of several pertinent instances of the power of the will in shaking off disease. We ourselves know of a cure where hydrophobia was arrested by a tremendous effort of the will. The power possessed by man of preventing or controlling insanity, is a subject of the highest importance, and one, we think, deserving of further investigation than it has ever yet received. There is a class of phenomena which, though not yet sufficiently assured, may some day help us to an understanding of the abnormal state of the brain. Any disturbance of the due equilibrium is injurious. The lecturer pointed out the necessity of acquiring or avoiding certain habits of thought, of varying employments, as among the many means of maintaining mental and physical health. Dr Blackwell mentioned the singular fact, that there are two classes of people, the most widely separated by social rank, whose numbers are thinned by death and disease, beyond the average of their fellow-citizens. These classes are represented by the common soldier of the barracks, and the fine lady. For months past, the newspapers and periodicals have been teeming with facts relative to the sanitary condition of the army; fashion yields her statistics more grudgingly; but monotony of life, vitiated air, deficiency of exercise, want of duties and employment, and injurious release from care and self-dependence, contribute, together, to identical results, in cases which at first sight seem as dissimilar as the poles.

Individuals are lost sight of in a system; but no system, however wisely conceived or humanely practised, can abrogate that law of nature which we understand by self-development—hence *all* persons ought to know something of that frame which is so 'fearfully and wonderfully made.' 'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing,' is the oft-repeated adage of the satisfied ignorant. No knowledge at all is still more dangerous. Would that statistics could reiterate again and again the number who are sacrificed annually to ignorance and neglect, on the one side, and to the omnipotence of fashion, on the other. Social life is ruled by women—let women inform themselves of the evils which lie in and about it.

To women as dispensers of charity, physiological knowledge is essential; and though much has been done by the noble institutions of our country, much special work remains for women—the name of Miss Nightingale is sufficient to endorse this statement with authority.

In a journal of this character, we can only allude to the more purely medical portion of Dr Blackwell's discourse. After receiving her diploma in America, that lady further prosecuted her studies in London and Paris, where she received high testimonials. Subsequently, she established herself at New York as a physician for women and children. She has now returned, hoping to find in her native country a sphere of usefulness, and her due meed of encouragement. She proposes to establish a hospital in London for the diseases of women and children, under the care of herself and her sister, who has likewise obtained a medical diploma. We understand, through the medium of the newspapers, that a lady has offered L.8000 towards this object.

It is further proposed that there should be a professorship for instructing women generally in hygiene.

The medical movement in America is successfully progressing. Society there has accepted the fact as one which is full of the promise of increasing utility.

The question of whether the innovation will find favour in England, can only be answered by time and trial. If the female branch of the profession had many such able advocates as Dr Elizabeth Blackwell, we have no doubt that definite progress would be made ere long, and that an assured position would be gained for the lady-professors. At present, the movement is an experiment. If public opinion might be tested by Dr Blackwell's sympathising audience, we should certainly pronounce a favourable augury.

There is one remark we will make in conclusion—that the power of *intuition*, characteristic of the feminine intellect, is admirably calculated to assist in discovering particular forms of disease, especially that class which is connected with hysteria—often so subtile, so complicated in its symptoms.

After the conclusion of the course, Mrs Jameson, in the name of the ladies present, returned thanks to the accomplished lecturer; and so terminated a very interesting, and certainly a very novel gathering, which, we doubt not, will afford subject for much earnest thought.

DELAY.

THE golden hours are fleeting, Jane;
The summer sweets are on the wane;
With brown is tinged the waving grain,
Then why, O why delay?
There's danger in the word, my love,
For life must ever onward move;
Its sands this truth too surely prove,
By running out alway.

The fruit is on the bending bough,
But buds were there when first my vow
Was breathed to thee. Then answered thou—
There *shall* be no delay.
Yet feathered broods since then have flown,
The black-bird sings with mellowed tone,
The fir-tree drops its dusky cone,
Full over-ripe to-day.

The soft air rustles through the wheat,
As though to test, by contact sweet,
If autumn will its task complete,
To ripen—not delay.
Amidst the stems, the corn-flowers lie,
Their blue eyes watching poppies nigh;
But neither bloomed, dear love, when I
Confessed to thee in May.

Come, an thou lov'st me, come with me;
The bells shall wake with marriage glee,
The clerk and parson clink their fee,
And both of them shall say:
'Was ever such poor guerdon given
For licensing a man to heaven;
But bless them both, for they have riven
The monster called—Delay.'

AGNOSTOS.

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'PORTRAITS IN *THIS* STYLE.'

It made a great stir in the small circle of my acquaintance. Everybody said what a splendid thing it was for me, until I began myself to think my fortune was really made at last, and that the good time which had been holding off for so long, had now come upon me with a rush. My sanguine, hopeful friends wagged their heads knowingly and self-congratulatingly, and said they were always certain it would be so. My severe, discouraging friends, whose dumb prophecies, in the way of elevations of the eyebrows, and wide openings of the eyes, had nearly driven me frantic by their portentous vagueness, now thawed towards me, and seemed to hint that they had been quite aware of it all along, only they were cautious and judicious, albeit others were not, and they did not want to puff up a young man with conceited notions; considering depression a wholesome state for the mind, and wet blankets, in general, rather useful applications. How it came about, I never knew precisely. Why it became necessary to paint Blodger, or that being granted, how it was the commission to paint the Blodger Testimonial Portrait was given to me, I have never been able to elicit. I only know that the *Muddlecombe Courier* one fine morning had great pleasure in announcing that the delightful duty of painting the portrait of that distinguished individual, Mr Alderman Blodger, the picture being executed for the behoof and at the expense of the municipal council, had been confided to their 'gifted fellow-townsman'—meaning me—who, they doubted not, would achieve a work likely to be a remarkable decoration of the Muddlecombe town-hall, and enhancing greatly the art-progress of the United Kingdom. It is true that the *Muddlecombe Independent*, in a sardonic article, headed 'Gross Corruption—Another Job,' denounced me and my connection with the affair in really unwarrantable language; but I have reason to believe that that journal was in the interest of a rival painter, Bister, who wrote its fine-art articles, and expected to receive the Blodger commission, but was disappointed.

It having been decided that Blodger should have a portrait, it was not of course for me to question the justice of the decision, or to seek to disturb it by ploughing up the merits of the case. I may be permitted to state, however, that although he might have been a great, even a good man, he was not excellently adapted for the purposes of art. Blodger was not possessed of those skin-deep, personal charms which are the desiderata of painters. He was not handsome—emphatically *not*. He had an eminently municipal figure. Strong opinions about local government and vested interests seemed written in every line of his face. He was massy in form, with a great, well-victualled bastion of a stomach, such as a strong army of turtles only could hope to carry. There was quite a natural cravat of flesh about his neck and chin. His little eyes, but for their glittering fierceness, would have been lost in the wide expanse of his face, like solitary pins in a large pincushion. A bush of hair, like a house-broom dyed red, blazed in tumbled grandeur on the top of his head, and was only eclipsed by the surpassing scarlet of his ears, which, from something phenomenal in their constitution, always rejoiced in a raw mutton-chop appearance, as though they had been recently and savagely boxed.

Of me, I think, Blodger took bitter views from the first moment of our acquaintance; but since, as a supreme utilitarian, he entertained degrading ideas of my profession, and even went so far as to denounce the fine arts as 'gammon,' it was not altogether surprising that his opinion of me was uncomplimentary. He always addressed me as 'young man,' frowning with a severe intensity, that seemed to say: 'No levity; the work before you is of vital importance. No joking, if *you* please; the face of Blodger is in your hands, and posterity, even more than the existing generation, demands that you will present to them a faithful effigy of Blodger.' He made a great favour and difficulty of sitting, and nearly worried to death a super-stout footman in purple plush, with continual commands and countermands in the way of messages to me as to whether he could or could not sit, and the time of sitting. On entering my studio, he produced a large gold watch, which he drew from his fob with as much care and labour as he could have exercised in the landing of a heavy fish, and keeping the hands of his watch constantly in view, he sat for half an hour, and not for one moment beyond. He then rose, slipped off his municipal robes and chain of office, resumed his watch—the restoration of that watch to its particular pocket was like packing away the last article in an overful carpet-bag—put on a hard, tight, and very shiny hat; gave it a blow on the top, like a bang on a kettle-drum; said 'good-morning' with an explosive snort, wheeled round, and marched quickly from the house. He was a fearful man to paint, and had a magisterial way of keeping his eye upon me, as though I were likely to commit some art-larceny, and embezzle one of his features, or defraud his complexion of its proper vermilion, that caused a culprit-feeling to come over me when in his presence. It seemed to me that it would be quite a natural conclusion to the business of a sitting, that Blodger should detonate: 'Committed as a rogue and a vagabond—old offender—tread-mill—one month—officer, remove the prisoner.' It was hard to be working with this feeling upon me, but, indeed, I couldn't shake it off. It was hard to look up and find Blodger ceaselessly down upon me, as it were. 'You'd better be careful, young man; you may have heard of such a thing as contempt of court. I warn you; we don't stand levity here; and don't waste valuable time. No artist affectations, if you please. Don't lean back in that calm, contemplative way, swaying your head from side to side. It's Blodger you're painting. Don't sweep about your colour: don't curve round your brush in that defiant, reckless way. You're painting Blodger's lips. You're placing the orthodox warm chocolate shadow in the centre of the face for the especial development and throwing up of Blodger's nose. Take heed! No trifling with Blodger's left eye, for, remember, Blodger has got his right eye on you, and no mistake. Look out!'

But at least Blodger sat well when he did sit. He did his work during his half-hour visits. Occasionally, it is true, he had an interrupting habit of loading himself with very heavy charges of snuff, and then firing himself off in loud percussive sneezes, each individual and distinct, like minute-guns at sea. Otherwise, he sat as steadily as a lay-figure. He seemed to have some power of petrifying himself for a prescribed period, within which he stirred not a limb, not a muscle. One might have been tempted to have gone up to him and pricked him with a pin, to ascertain if he were a real, and not an imitation Blodger, but for the terrible life blazing in his eye. But the bodily quiescence which gave such comfort to Blodger during the sittings was not imitated by his wife. Mrs Blodger frequently accompanied him in his visits to the studio, and I fairly dreaded her coming. How I thanked my stars that Muddlecombe had not commissioned me to paint *her* portrait also; for she was an amazing creature, Mrs Blodger—a woman of large calibre, a sort of aldermanic Semiramis. By the elderly gentlemen of Muddlecombe, she was unanimously voted 'a monstrous fine woman'—the peculiar old-gentleman phrase for the class of beauty of which Mrs Blodger was a shining example. I decline to say anything about her age; in fact, I have no distinct notions about it: it was not a subject upon which I dared to trust myself; for soon after I had heard the terrible peals which Purple-plush thundered on my door-knocker—soon after the bang-bang-flop of the carriage-steps being let down, the swaying and swinging about of strong satin or velvet skirts on the staircase, the gush of perfume and pomade, and the grand floating entrance of Mrs Blodger, like a frigate in full sail—soon after these, I may say I almost lost consciousness. I have a vision—nothing more substantial, for Blodger's eye was always screwing me down tight to my work—of a parrot-like nose pecking about at me and at everything else in the room, being the property of an enlarged woman looking like a colossal bird of prey in cherry-coloured velvet. She had a way of peering through massive gold-framed eye-glasses, which she was always lifting astride her nose. She insisted on my continuing my work, and then stood over me with her glasses. It was like pursuing a task under terror of the lash. I tried to paint, to concentrate my whole thoughts upon my picture; but when I knew that Blodger's eye was attacking me in front, while Mrs Blodger's eye-glass mercilessly harassed me in the rear; when I felt that she was subjecting me to a searching examination, that she had looked well at my head, and thoroughly appreciated that portion of the crown where the hair is beginning to thin; that she had seen that my shirt-collar was slightly dingy, and that some little misunderstanding between it and my cravat, from hurried putting on, had rendered their union less perfect than it might have been; that she had now arrived at my coat-collar, and had noted how old and threadbare a garment is the shooting-jacket in which it seemeth good to me to paint; and that she had taken account of my hands, observed the smear of Venetian red on my right forefinger; was wondering how ever I came to possess an opal ring; had contemplated that one of my wrist-bands was soiled by work, and that the other had lost a button; and was now quietly going down my back to discover that one of the buttons behind was missing, and the pocket-hole torn: my nervous anxiety nearly drew my brush from my fingers. And then the wonderful way in which she talked! She alluded to me as a 'painter person,' and referred generally to 'artist-people.' She found everything 'So droll!' 'So curious!' 'So eccentric!' and had an interrogative way of saying 'Really?' 'No?' 'Yes?' 'Indeed?' 'You don't say so?' that was as puzzling as any conundrum I ever heard. She would sweep round the room, whirling about her velvet skirts, knocking down heaps of sketches, cardboards, and canvases, and threatening to destroy utterly, or at least deprive for life of the use of its limbs, the lay-figure in the corner. Nothing was sacred, nothing escaped her superb investigation. Sketch-books, portfolios, even the note-book with the addresses of models, even the unpaid bills upon the mantel-shelf—all received their share of attention. Nay, the awful canvases, turned scrupulously with their faces to the wall—efforts which failure should have sanctified—even these did she turn and examine. Even to my famous studies of that remarkable model, Biceps, in some of his most muscular attitudes; I couldn't stop her, and she would do it.

I may mention that Mrs Blodger carefully abstained from any criticism on the portrait while it was in progress; but the dumb way in which she stood for prolonged periods behind my chair, seemed to me the severest castigations in the critical way that I had ever received. One remark, it is true, she did occasionally give utterance to; it was a sort of lament or expostulation that I had 'not turned Blodger round, and made him looking the other way.' There was really no especial reason why he should look one way rather than the other; but Mrs Blodger had made up her mind that there was; and this strange remark was at intervals recurring in a tone of surprise, that I had not adopted a suggestion the carrying out of which would have led to the whole work being done over again. She appeared to suppose that heads could be turned about, and eyes made to glance in different directions, as easily in art as in nature. Blodger himself expressed no curiosity at all about his portrait, regarding that as altogether my affair: he considered the contract to be, that he should sit, and that I should paint until completion, and that meanwhile we had nothing else to do with each other.

So the Blodger portrait went on. I may avow here—I did not avow it at the time—that it was the first genuine portrait I had ever painted. I had, of course, painted from nature often enough, and copied as accurately as I could; I had even painted a portrait of Charley Blithers, student of the Academy, who had also painted my portrait in return; I had had sittings from Mrs Miffin, my housekeeper, by way of practice; I had painted my mother, my brother, my sister: but these were mere experiments, with nothing depending on the issue. But now I was at work on a real portrait, to be paid for in hard cash. It was a great event in my art-life; it was like a young surgeon's first operation, not on the dead, but on the living. I was correspondingly nervous about it; but still it went on. The white surface of the canvas, which had had rather a ghostly effect upon my nerves at first, had now become smothered under various pigments. Blodger's face was breaking through the mist of paint, like a coppery red sun through a yellow November fog: he was beginning to rise and shine like an exhalation from a swamp. The portrait was growing out of its immature stages like a plum ripening on a tree. Day by day, art strode nearer to nature; completion was approaching, and the faster it came on, the more my anxieties increased. All day I toiled at it, and I contemplated it carefully the last thing before going to bed. I supped off it, I may say, and wofully it disagreed with me. Blodger invaded even my dreams. In a paroxysm of alarm, I have risen from my couch, and in night-uniform, with re-lighted candle, I have hurried to my studio, to assure myself of the safety of my work; for now it seemed to me the picture had been stolen by a desperate gang of oppositionists, headed by Bister; now that the painting was changing colour, by some wonderful chemical action, and the face assuming a lively pea-green hue; and now again the picture became inflated like a balloon, and getting loose, broke through the roof, and soared away high up, just sufficiently in sight for me to be perfectly conscious that the Blodger eye was still upon me, drilling down from the clouds.

About the background, grave questions arose. I must confess that I was favourable to the old-portrait properties—the Corinthian column, the red-velvet draperies, and the rolling, feather-bed clouds, with a streak of orange-chrome on the horizon, like a gold band on a footman's hat. But, above all, I wanted my red draperies—it was so necessary to quench in some way the fire of Blodger's countenance; to extinguish in a measure the blaze of his hair. Other opinions, however, were rife on the subject. It seemed to be desired that the background should be devoted to a sort of panorama of Blodger's whole career. Some wanted his birthplace in; some the school at which he had been educated. Many urged the introduction of the Muddlecombe workhouse, to which Blodger had added a new wing; many that the pump which Blodger had erected in the market-place should be distinctly visible. The spire of Muddlecombe Church, the lantern of the Muddlecombe Literary and Scientific Institution, the tall chimneys of Blodger's manufactory, nay, even the children of the Blodger Charity, in the costume chosen by the founder, something between the attire of an Elizabethan nobleman and of a post-boy out of his boots—all these, it was insisted, should be found in the background of the Blodger portrait. The result was a compromise. I obtained my red curtain; my lowering sky was conceded; the Corinthian column was rejected; and the spire of the church, the tall chimneys of the workshops, and a distant red blotch, which might or might not be the Muddlecombe workhouse, according to the fancy of the spectator—all these were inserted.

The picture was finished. A frame, gorgeously golden, was ordered for it. The studio was cleared out to accommodate an expected rush of visitors. Charley Blithers was favoured with a private view. He sat down before the easel; smoked out a whole pipe; shook out the ashes into the palm of his hand, threw them into the fireplace; and then said calmly: 'What a guy!'

He repeated the expression thrice, as though it were the result of profound conviction, and could not be too thoroughly stated.

'He is not a good-looking man,' I said.

'Well, he isn't,' in the same tone of conviction.

'If it wouldn't hurt his feelings,' he continued, eyeing the picture in a deprecating way, and bowing his head, as though he, too, had been caught by the Blodger eye, and was acknowledging its influence—'if it wouldn't hurt his feelings, I should say he was downright ugly, and no mistake at all about it.'

'But it's like him?'

'I should rather say it was.'

'Well, what more do you want?' Charley looked puzzled.

'Wasn't I commissioned to paint his likeness?'

'Well, you see, it's my opinion' (in a quiet, thoughtful way)—'it's my opinion, that when ugly people sit for their portraits, they don't precisely mean that they want a picture exactly of what they are, but something like what they might have been, if Nature hadn't thought differently. You see, when a man has a rough draft to be copied, he wants it done in a fair round-hand; he don't care to have all the blots, and smears, and interlinings copied exactly. Ugly people require that the rough draft of their faces should be transcribed in a smooth pleasant way.'

'You think I ought to have flattered him more?'

'We don't so much call it flattery, as making things pleasant. I think you might have made things rather more pleasant.'

'I've done a great deal for him; indeed, I have. You don't know how I've softened him and paled him. There's a good half inch off his mouth; and I've cut away one of his chins altogether! He's an awful subject to paint.'

'Well, he is.'

Charley took his leave, and I was not greatly encouraged by his remarks.

However, there was nothing more to be done; the picture was completed; so I wrote a note to Mr Blodger, announcing the termination of my labour, and requesting that he would call and inspect the painting. An hour after, Purple-plush thundered at the door; Mr Blodger would call directly. He came, with Mrs Blodger slapping about with her heavy cherry-velvet skirts, and armed with her formidable double eye-glass. However, I had attired myself with a scrupulous neatness, and was therefore the less alarmed at her inspective attacks.

Blodger, in loudly creaking boots, marched towards the picture as though he were going to charge through it; but thinking better of it, he halted abruptly. Mrs Blodger followed him. For some time, both gazed speechlessly at the picture.

'Do you think it like?' I asked at length, in a gently respectful way.

'Like? Like who?' retorted Blodger, jerking out the words in a fierce, harsh way, like loud notes blown sharply and suddenly on a savage-minded trombone, and crossing his fat arms on his fat chest in an obese Napoleonic attitude.

The blow took away my breath; I could make no answer. Meanwhile, Blodger's eye dug deep wounds into me; meanwhile, Mrs Blodger raked me fore and aft with chain-shot through her double-barrelled eye-glass.

'Young man,' Blodger went crackling on, 'you may be clever, but *I'm* not a fool. Do you call *that* my portrait?'

He projected a stumpy forefinger indignantly at the picture.

'That like my B.?' Mrs Blodger was a woman without mercy.

I tried to say something about having done my best, about being sorry they didn't like it, that others had considered it successful, that I should be happy to attend to any suggestions, would make any alterations, &c., &c. I doubt if I made myself intelligible; it seemed to me I was emitting merely a confused and gabbling murmur. If I was intelligible, I doubt if they heard me.

'Young man, I saw it at the first; you made up your mind to it from the beginning; you were predetermined to insult me. It is my belief that you are a creature of the opposition—a tool in the hands of the *Muddlecombe Independent;* that your express mission was to endeavour to humiliate me—to make me ridiculous. *That* is a caricature; it is *not* my portrait. And let me tell you that you have mistaken your man; you don't know who it is you have to deal with; it is evident to me that you do *not* know Blodger.'

He paused. His address had warmed him; it had even boiled up into bubbles on his forehead.

'But I'll foil you, sir. Do your worst; I defy you. This insult shall not be inflicted on the municipal authorities, for they are affected when I am touched. They shall not have that portrait; they shall never have it. And once more let me tell you to be careful, or levity and folly will be your ruin.'

He turned away. There was an emphatic indignation in the very creaking of his boots. He banged on his hat. For the last time, Mrs Blodger eyed me with her duplex basilisk glance; she courtesied to the ground in her copious velvets with sardonic civility; she knocked down a chair as she made her exit. Purple-plush gathered them into their chariot. Flop-bang-bang went the steps, and the Blodgers passed from me for ever. Blodger was as good, or as bad, as his word.

The Portrait Committee, in strong terms, refused to receive the picture, and took the commission away from me. It was great joy for the *Muddlecombe Independent;* it was immense triumph to Bister.

Charley Blithers came rushing in. He was in high spirits, and whirled about his wide-awake.

'I've sold my *Jupiter and Antiope* for seven pound ten.'

In his glee, he stuck his hat on the head of the lay-figure.

'Hollo! Why, what's the matter with you?'

I was sitting in a melancholy way before the Blodger portrait. I put him in possession of the sad results of my labours.

'Wheugh!' he whisked. 'Won't have it, eh? What a shame!'

'After losing four months over it—squandering days and nights upon that hideous head. He never seemed so ugly before.'

'He *is* hideous! If there were a public-house called the Ugly Man, you might sell this for the sign-board.'

'Shall I put my foot through it?' I asked. I was angry, and much inclined to vent my wrath in hacking Blodger to pieces. I took up my brushes.

'Let's make him utterly ridiculous,' I said. I painted a superb moustache upon Blodger's wide upper-lip; I made his eyes start out even more fearfully; I stuck a pipe in his mouth; I caused his hair to bramble out at the sides in an amazing manner.

'Look how well the light falls on that wide-awake,' said Charley; 'paint it in. I *should* laugh to see Blodger in a Jim Crow hat.'

I painted it, and he had his laugh. More, I placed a gorget round Blodger's neck; I twisted up the ends of his moustache till they looked like tenpenny nails; I put him on a sabretache and a stage property-sword. I was in a fair way of painting in every article of still-life in the studio.

'Well, he's a wonder now,' said Charley; 'he'd hardly know himself, and I'm sure his mother wouldn't. I don't know why you shouldn't turn it into a fancy-picture altogether—a very little would do it now; it would be better than losing it entirely. Finish carefully those suggestions you've sketched in; stick a feather in his hat, and call him'——

'Maccaroni?'

'No; but Pistol or Bardolph, or something like that.'

'I don't think he looks Shakspearian.'

'Well, Rinaldo Rinaldini, or Captain Rolando.'

'Who was he?'

'The robber in *Gil Blas*, wasn't he? Anyhow, it's a good name, and would look well in the catalogue.'

'What catalogue?'

'Why, the Academy!'

'You wouldn't have me send it there!'

'Why not? You've nothing else done—it's a pity to miss a year.'

'They'll never hang it.'

'Who knows? I send everything I've got. It's a speculation. After a certain time, they give over selection, and hang according to size. Why shouldn't there happen to be just such a gap in the wall as that picture would fit into. I've often had pictures hung in that way; ay, and have sold them too. I'm going to send an odd lot this time; I'll call and take yours down with me, if you like.'

It was a pity, certainly, to waste so much work.

I acted on Charley's suggestion. The portrait was metamorphosed into a sort of fancy-picture. A fine, crusted, old-master, many-years-in-bottle look was given to it by rich glazings of warm brown, and adroit picking-out of high lights. Charley called it a '*tête de veau à la Rembrandt*, served up with a rich brown gravy.'

It was sent in due time to the Academy; it was hung, and in a tolerable place—only one above the line. There was some mistake in the catalogue, however, for the picture was attributed to Blithers, and somehow, a singularly inappropriate verse from the Psalms was tacked to it.

One June morning, Charley Blithers burst into my studio. He was convulsed with laughter, which for some moments mocked at all his attempts to speak, and turned his words into gibberish. At last, in a lull of his mirth, a sentence stole out: 'Captain Rolando's sold!' and then he tumbled back shaking into a chair.

'No!' I screamed.

'Fact! I've just seen it in the list. Your own figure—fifty pounds.'

I began a dance of peculiar character, intending to convey an idea of amazed delight. Blithers was lost in an ague-fit of laughter.

'Stop a bit! you don't know all yet. Who do you think has bought it?'

'Haven't an idea!'

'*Blodger!*'

What a yell we gave. Mrs Miffin came running up stairs to know what was the matter.

'It's true!' shouted Charley. 'He won a prize the Art-union—a fifty-pounder. He commissioned a friend in town to choose a picture for him *unconsciously, he's become the purchaser of his portrait!*'

We commenced a delirious *pas de deux*. We shook down my plaster-cast of the Apollo, which was broken into a thousand pieces; the limbs of the lay-figure, a moment of insane excitement held to represent the defeated Blodger, were strewed about the room. We danced until nature gave in.

I have often wondered how Blodger liked his prize. That he never suspected his own portrait lay *perdu* in the picture—that he never knew I painted it can well believe. I am persuaded he has hung it over his sideboard, and while denouncing art as 'gammon' with a side-wind supports the picture as 'a fine work by C. Blithers.' 'A promising painter-person' adds Mrs B. I have often wondered that the painting has not laughed out fairly, and betrayed itself as it follows Blodger about, sees him butting his red head into the soup-tureen at dinner, and notes Mrs Blodger's double-glass throned on her parrot nose, and contemplates all this *with the Blodger eye;* and I have often longed for a harlequin bat with which to strike the canvas, and cause all the trappings of Captain Rolando to slide off, as the disguise does from the gentleman who is 'afterwards pantaloon' in the pantomimes, and reveal to its astounded proprietor the original Blodger Testimonial Portrait, executed in a style of art utterly without parallel.

A DEAD LOSS.

With the beginning of a new year comes, in every well-regulated establishment, the review of the transactions of the old year—the overhauling of the books and the striking of the balance—so much to the good, so much to the bad; so much that might have been saved here, so much more that might have been gained there: and we do not think we could choose a fitter season than the present for asking our readers to look at one or two items in the accounts of a certain old-established firm, in which they have an interest. The firm is that great one, in which we may all consider ourselves as partners, and which does business under the name of Bull and Co.; and that part of their accounts we would call attention to is the one under the charge of the Registrar-general of Births, Deaths, and Marriages and his legion of assistants, who have a busy time of it taking stock of the company's gains and losses in the shape of human life. From the results at which these indefatigable gentlemen have arrived, and which we find stated in their several reports, weekly, quarterly, and annual, we discover, that while there is an abundant and constantly increasing supply of that priceless commodity, there is at the same time an annual waste of it, quite in our power to check, which would be a revenue of itself for many a less fortunate state.

It is a cheering fact, that during 1856 (the last year for which the returns have been entirely made up) the rate of births in England and Wales was considerably greater, and that of deaths considerably less, than in any previous year since the system of registration was established; but our pride and exultation on that score is not a little diminished when we learn, that of the 400,000 and odd deaths which take place annually, on a rough estimate, somewhere about 150,000 are attributable to causes chiefly sanitary, which, if properly dealt with, might be greatly mitigated, if not altogether removed. In other words, that one out of every four persons who died in England, this last year, might have been living to this day, had society only done its duty, and given him or her a fair chance. Of these 'lost lives,' thousands were cut off, not in old age, when they had not long to last, but in the very spring or summer of their years, so that their premature decease inflicts a double loss on our population—the loss not only of themselves, but also of the offspring which, had they survived and married, they would no doubt have had.

A certain proportion of this preventable mortality is, no doubt, due to such causes as intemperance, want of proper nourishment, carelessness in the use of machinery, and even criminal violence; but, as we have said, the chief cause is the deficiency of our sanitary arrangements, and our systematic and flagrant violation of all rules of health. We all of us know, but, we suspect, few of us bear in mind that every living body is subject to perpetual change; that there is a constant and regular ascent of matter from the earth, through various phases, into the atmosphere, and thence by absorption into the body, and as constant and regular a descent of matter, given off by the body, through the same phases in reverse order, back to the earth. At certain stages of the process of disintegration, however, the decaying matter emanating from the body assumes a pernicious influence on the living; and hence the atmosphere, unless quickly cleared of it, necessarily partakes of its deleterious character. The great aim of sanitary science is, therefore, to drive this decaying matter away from the air and water before it can impregnate them with its poison, and get it restored to the earth as quickly as possible. Of course, where the population is dense, the denser will be the emanations of decaying matter within any given space, and the more unwholesome the atmosphere; and, accordingly, it may be taken as a rule, that in proportion to the density of the population will be the excess of the mortality. In three groups of districts, where the average number of persons living on a hundred acres of land was 9, 17, and 22, the annual mortality during ten years was found to be at the rates of respectively 15, 16, and 17 in 1000 living; whilst in other two groups, where the density of population was 279 and 693 to a hundred acres, the mortality was 27, and from 28 to 36 in 1000 living; and, generally speaking, the deaths in the town, where multitudes are crowded into a small space, to the deaths in the country, where population is sparse and widely distributed, bear the proportion of 5 to 1. Some notion of the sort of solid atmosphere which the people of our crowded towns are compelled to breathe, may be had from the facts ascertained by Dr Smith of Manchester; that while the organic matter in the air at the Hospice St Bernard is 2·4, and at the German Ocean 2·5, that of the centre of Manchester is 52·, its outskirts varying from 44· to 19·. The air at the two places first mentioned may be considered as about the purest, in regard to its ingredients, to be found anywhere; and at the other extreme may be placed the air of a foul pig-sty which Dr Smith examined, and found to be at 94.

According to the last census returns, the great increase of the population of England, in the ten years after 1841, was found in the towns; and, as the registrar remarks, the health of the towns may be taken as the gauge of the strength of England. In London, the population has almost doubled itself since 1811; but instead of there being any corresponding increase in the extent of the area over which it is spread, the warehouses have been swallowing up the dwellings; where, in 1811, there were 16,751 inhabited houses within a square mile of the city, there are only 14,580 in 1858, so that some 22 persons must now be huddled into the space that 10 used to have to themselves. Generally speaking, it is calculated that in the towns, in 1851, fourteen persons were living in the same space as one in the country; and, of course, the packing in the towns must be yet closer now. It is clear, therefore, that one of the first steps for guarding ourselves against the heavy loss in human life which the registrar-general has discovered, must be to adopt measures for thinning the population, and distributing it over a wider area.

Fatal, however, as is the crowding of the population, the registrar declares that the cess-pool or midden is still the great destroyer of life. It is estimated that in London there is constantly stagnating under ground upwards of seventeen millions of cubic feet of decomposing matter; every year the poisonous effluvia arising from it carries off 14,000 persons, and may be said to shorten the life-rate by about twelve years, as compared with the rate in healthy country districts. That these noxious accumulations might be got rid of, and the great bulk of these 'lost lives' preserved by proper sanitary arrangements, is not a mere matter of theory and conjecture, but has been proved by what we learn (from a paper read at the Social Conference) has been done at Ely. At one time completely under water, and even at a comparatively recent period, more a cluster of boggy islands than a tract of land, the fen-country of England has always held a melancholy pre-eminence for its unwholesomeness. The very name is suggestive of ague and malaria; and amidst its rotting marshes and pestilential fogs, the death-rate has for centuries been higher than in almost any other part of England. On one of the old fen-islands stands Ely, a quiet little cathedral town, of some 6000 inhabitants, of whom more used to die every year than even in the surrounding unhealthy districts.

In 1851, the local board of health, aided by energetic Mr Burn, the engineer, set to work to improve the town. First of all, they procured a copious supply of water, and then they substituted for the 'poison-pits,' a general system of self-cleansing drains and sewers, to carry off the noxious matter before it had time to decompose and infect the atmosphere. Directly the new works were set agoing, there was a perceptible decrease in the mortality. From 26 in 1000, it sank to 19, and kept on diminishing, till in the last two years it was down to 17, and even in one part of the town, to 13. On the average, four years of life has been given to every inhabitant!

But Ely is not the only instance, although it is a very remarkable one, from the peculiarly unfavourable ground which it offered for the experiment. In the pleasant little market-town of Croydon, some eight miles from the metropolis, the death-rate, by similar means, has been reduced from 2·857, in 1853, to 1·594 in 1858; and, in fact, wherever the self-cleansing system has been fairly tried, and the middens got rid of, the results have been equally encouraging. At first, of course, the erection of the improved works is costly; but once set agoing, they are so simple in their mode of operation, and so rarely get out of order, that in the course of a few years they well repay the investment, in a mere pecuniary way, apart from the enormous saving of human life.

Leaving the town, and its smoke and bad smells, let us take a run into the country, and see how things are managed there. We come to some pretty little village nestling to the side of a swelling upland, and overlooking a rich tract of pasture-ground and cornfields. There, at least, we say, death will have but an idle time of it. With simple habits, wholesome outdoor labour, plenty of room to live in, and a freshening breeze always at hand to carry off the decaying matter, the people there are sure to be healthy and long-lived. We are charmed with the picturesque look of the cottages, with the quaint lozenge-panes in the windows, and the trellised woodbine at the door; with the clean dimity curtains, inside, and the well-scoured floor. Stepping down to the big farmhouse at the end of the lane, whose white gable we see glistening through the trees, we are in raptures with the scrupulous tidiness that prevails; the dairy, with its bright array of speckless dishes, and snow-white tables, and tiled floor; the house itself, so well ordered and carefully swept, that a little dust would be almost an agreeable relief, by way of contrast. Just out of the sooty precincts of the metropolis, we are fascinated with the beauty and rustic freshness of the scene. We forget to notice that the windows of the cottage are not made to open; that a midden is steaming at the back of it; that here and there the damp arising from the undrained ground has written its presence in great blotches on the wall; that the farmhouse rubs shoulders with the yard where the refuse of the house and of all the animals is kept month after month undergoing fermentation; and that, instead of being on an elevation, from which the water would flow off naturally, it stands in a hollow part of the ground, and may therefore be said to be almost ankle-deep in water. Did we notice these and other flagrant violations of the laws of health, we should not be so startled, as we now are, to hear that 6426 English farmers die in a year, that many of these are young men, about a half under sixty-five years of age, and that a large proportion of these deaths is attributable to preventable causes.

An eminent medical professor at Oxford gives an account of the breaking out of a fever, which lasted nine months, in just such another village as we have described. It was brought to the place from a neighbouring town; but the people were predisposed to it from their ill-ventilated dwellings and the proximity of noxious accumulations. One woman told the professor, when he visited her cottage, that the landlord would not allow them to have windows that would open. 'Women,' he said, 'are best kept shut up;' and so the poor souls were often half stifled at night, and could not sleep for the choking sensation they felt.

We have run over these few items in the registrar's reports, just to open people's eyes to the heavy waste of human life which is taking place every year from our negligence and mismanagement. The most conclusive testimony, in the way of cause and effect, has been borne by the experiments which have already been made as to the efficacy of the remedies to which we have referred, and we trust that the next year will see a large instalment of the present 'dead loss' transferred to the other side of the account, on the principle that a life saved is a life gained.

MY THREE WOOINGS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

In the morning appeared another pale-pink and very tender letter from Rose; luckily for me, it was brought up to my room, instead of being laid on the breakfast-table. I grew desperate, and forthwith packed my portmanteau, ordered the coach to be stopped at the end of the lane, rushed down the avenue to meet it, got inside, with a vague fear of being seen and stopped if I ventured on the box, and did not feel safe till I arrived at home—for I had still a home, changed, saddened, humble as it was, and a good, dear mother, and a kind-hearted, loving sister.

'Such fun, Gerald,' said my sister Jane, the next morning; 'your old friend, Hester Dering, is going to be married to Cousin John.'

'What! John Hartland? I never heard a word of it.'

'Yes; but listen. They are all going a tour to the Rhine—the Hartlands and Derings—and have asked me to go with them, and you too. I was going to write this very day, only I was afraid you found it so pleasant at the general's, that you would not come away; and mamma did not much like my going unless you could accompany us. But now you will go, won't you?'

I needed not much persuasion. The Rhine?—I wished it had been the Nile or the Ganges, to have taken me further away from my embarrassments. Thus the cowardly weakness of my nature led me always into fresh troubles, rather than look the present ones in the face.

What a lovely evening it was! how the tints of the sunset lingered on the heights, as we stood upon the 'Rhenish strand!'

Hester Dering was an indefatigable sketcher, and her *fiancé*, Cousin John, very much preferred clambering to the highest point he could see, 'to look for a view,' to lingering by her side whilst she was drawing; so that, in our rambles, I was constantly left to escort her, my sister Jane and Cousin John taking little excursions here and there, and bringing us word of wonderful 'prospects,' whose picturesqueness they generally measured by their extent.

Hester had finished her sketch in the deepening twilight. 'Now, Gerald,' said she, as she put up her pencils, 'I shall be able to talk to you. I have been very, very much interested in all you have been telling me; I hope you have not thought me indifferent because I went on drawing?'

'No,' said I, offering my arm, which she took directly—'No. I like to talk to you while you are drawing, because you don't look at me.'

'An odd reason,' said she, laughing. 'Have you no better?'

'O yes! Because we are such very old friends, Hester, and I don't feel the least afraid of you. You are not satirical, though you are so clever; and then you are engaged, you know.'

'The best reason of all, you think; and no wonder, modest Master Gerald, considering all the mischief you have done. But seriously, Gerald, what will you do, when we get home again, with these two engagements of yours? Which of the two—for I have tried in vain to discover—do you really love?—I don't say love best, as one would ask a child if it loves its nurse or its sugar-plums best, for there cannot be the least comparison in a true love.'

'Well,' said I, 'you may laugh at me as you will, but I solemnly declare I don't know.'

'Then I fear you love neither the one nor the other. Rose May was decidedly your first love.'

'Oh, as for that, I was desperately in love at ten years old, for a whole holiday, with a certain fairy queen of seven, as perhaps you may remember, Miss Hester.'

'Meaning me, I suppose! Yes, those were happy days, Gerald! Do you remember that tool-house in the garden, which we made believe was an enchanted palace, and the gardener's dog was the dragon to guard me, when I was the enchanted princess, and you the knight-errant?'

'O yes, yes,' said I with a sort of bitterness. 'You see that Rose May was decidedly not my first love.'

'Gerald, you puzzle me,' said she, shaking her head. 'Tell me sincerely—do you, or do you not, wish to marry either of these girls?'

Hester Dering had a way of looking up suddenly into one's face—

Few her looks, but every one
Like unexpected light surprises.

Her eyes were more soft than bright, and more dreaming than penetrating. As to their colour, I never knew what it was—I never thought about it; but those rare looks of hers were like no other looks. They plunged into one's soul; and when she fixed that intent gaze upon you, I defy any one to tell her a falsehood.

I felt myself colour as she looked at me; my eyes sunk under hers; then a sudden thought, like an electric shock, thrilled through me. 'Hester, why do you want to know? Tell me sincerely, how does it interest you?'

It was her turn to blush crimson, and to look down, sideways, anyway, to avoid my eager gaze. She did not immediately answer, and her lips seemed forming inarticulate words, none of which were what she meant to utter. At last, with a little pettish gesture, quite unlike her usual quiet manner, she said: 'Gerald, you are unkind and unreasonable. You have talked to me for all these pleasant weeks with the openness of an old friend, and now you speak as if my interest in you were mere curiosity, or impertinent interference.'

I scarcely knew which astonished me the most—the unjust accusation, or the agitated manner in which it was made. I knew not how to reply, especially as she took her arm from mine, and walked on quickly. I followed, and exclaimed: 'Hester, dear Hester, what on earth have I done or said to offend you thus? Ask me what you will, and I will tell you. I have no idea of anything but gratitude for your kindness in advising me. No one knows me so well as you, and I am led to tell you things, and talk to you as I can to no one else in this wide world.'

She had slackened her pace, and I walked on by her side.

'Why, then,' said she softly, 'did you ask me why and how I was interested in asking you the question I did?'

'Forgive me, if I for an instant, one single instant, mistook you. Forgive my absurd presumption—be still my sister and my friend.'

'You have a sister,' she replied, slightly smiling; 'and you are, I think, more than provided with young-lady friends; and I'——

'Yes, yes; you, Hester, are engaged, and it is only the more kind of you to have time to think of me at all.'

She smiled sadly, and again gave me one of her sudden inquiring looks; but when I offered my arm, she did not take it, and we spoke no more, but continued silently walking side by side. At a turn of the path, a sudden burst of laughter assailed us from Jane and Cousin John.

'What exceedingly agreeable company you two must be!' said he. 'We just watched you, for fun, behind this bush, and I'll be hanged if you have spoken a word these ten minutes.'

I felt exceedingly irate, and Hester, who had quite regained her composure of manner, said: 'Your surveillance was very well timed, and you were fortunate to escape the proverbial fate of listeners.'

'How severe you are, Hester,' said he. 'Of course, I was only in joke!' He offered her his arm, but she did not take it, while Jane and I followed at a little distance.

'Poor Cousin John!' said Jane, in a sort of half-soliloquy. 'I hardly think they quite suit each other.'

'Why not, Jane?' said I.

'Oh, I don't know! Hester is so clever.'

'And John Hartland is not.'

'Well,' she replied, 'I don't think *that*, but not just in the same way. He is almost afraid she is not good-tempered.'

'Did he tell you so?'

'Not to complain of her, for he believes she is devotedly attached to him, and would not for the world make her unhappy; but she certainly is very odd. Now, John Hartland must be the best creature in the world not to be annoyed at her always talking to you. Don't you wonder he is not jealous?'

'I never thought about it. He knows what old friends Hester and I are.'

'Yes; but still he said that some people would not like it, and that if he had not had me to walk about with while Hester sits drawing, it would have been another thing.'

While my sister ran on thus, I was pondering deeply. I had often vaguely thought so, but it now came over me with a deep conviction, that Hester Dering and John Hartland were as opposite as the poles. Could they love each other? Would they marry, after all? Then, with a longing, aching curiosity, I asked myself, Does Hester love him? I longed to be again alone with her, and wondered

I had never observed all this before. I was entirely absorbed in watching her. Did she, then, neglect me? Had all her interest in her early friend ceased? I thought so, for she grew more and more reserved and distant, and now evidently avoided being alone with me. As for John Hartland, I could see no great change in him, except that he looked piqued and annoyed sometimes after an interview with Hester, at which I felt a quite inhuman gratification. My sister Jane was equally sought by the two, and almost always made a third in their walks. Was the change, then, only in me? Nothing makes time appear so long as travelling; the succession of new images and impressions make us live months in every hour.

It was scarcely a week after the conversation I have recorded, and yet I looked back upon the time of Hester's confidential manner as to some long bygone days. I had taken to sketching now, but she had left it off. It was an excuse to me to go long, lonely walks and excursions: on one of these I had left the party entirely, and was to rejoin them in a few days. During this solitary journey, communing with my own heart, it made me some strange revelations. Hester's questions haunted me for ever: Did I or did I not wish to marry either Rose or Justina? and my heart answered loudly, and without hesitation: No, no. The image that filled my every thought and feeling was Hester's? Why had I not tried to solve that problem which always haunted me? Did she love John Hartland? If not ——

Unable to bear this uncertainty longer, I returned to rejoin the party a day before I had intended. They were at Boppart. My habitual shyness prevailed, and I would not go at once to them there, but remained in the neighbourhood; and then, with my camp-stool and sketching materials, I wandered on to a spot where I had last watched the artistic pencil of Hester Dering. I scarcely knew if my vivid fancy deceived me, but there, in the identical spot, sat Hester. She was alone; and till I approached her quite near, she had not seen me. I had no reason to suppose my presence would be such an overpowering surprise to her; and she was too courageous and self-possessed in general for the plea of weak nerves; but when she had started up with a glow of pleasure in her face to greet me, she suddenly grew pale, and trembled so violently, she was obliged to sit down again.

I threw myself on the grass by her, and held her hand. All my variously rehearsed speeches, by which I should probe her secret, all my own confessions, fled. I could say nothing but:

'Hester, I could not stay away any longer. You don't want me; perhaps you never will want me; but you must let me see you sometimes, when you are married; even you must let me see you, though you will not talk to me as we used. I cannot live without that' ——

All my fine speeches and searching questions, without committing myself, came to this.

I held her hand to my face, and covered my eyes with it; I did not venture to look at her, as she sat raised just above me on a turfy bank. The hand trembled in mine, but she did not draw it away, though I waited in vain till she should speak.

'Speak to me, Hester,' said I. 'Tell me only that you will forgive this vehemence; that you will be to me as you were, and counsel me, and let me talk to you as you did long ago; and yet not so very long ago neither, if one counts by time only. I have been so miserable since you have changed your manner to me. I promise never again to forget that you are engaged—that you are another's.'

'Gerald,' she said—'Gerald, look at me; look up.'

I quite started at the sound of her voice, it was so very sweet and gentle. I met her eyes bending down upon me, softly and timidly, not as she had ever looked before; and she smiled as I had never seen her smile.

'It has indeed seemed long since you went away—two days ago,' she said; 'and so much has happened that it might have been two years. Gerald, I am free; it is all broken off, and ought never to have been! I am free now to talk to you as before, and help you to find out which of the two' ——

I started to my feet, bewildered with the unmeasurable joy of this most unlooked-for change. She had risen too, and her hand was still clasped in mine.

'Free, free!' I gasped out. 'Then, Hester, you are mine, and mine only!'

I clasped her in my arms, and held her like a recovered treasure, never to be parted with more. I did not want her to speak then; I was satisfied to feel her dear head resting on my shoulder, and her heart beating against my own; but she broke from me as with an effort, and said:

'Ah, Gerald, how can I believe you, after all you have told me of others?'

But she did believe me, notwithstanding.

My sister Jane, coming out in search of Hester, was the first to interrupt us. She was by no means astonished to see me back, and did not look much disturbed by the events that had occurred in my absence. John Hartland had left the party, and returned to England. His father and aunt, who evidently suspected something had gone wrong, though it was not yet disclosed, looked anything but pleased to see me again, nor was my reception much better by Mr and Mrs Dering. In short, for a shy man to feel himself so entirely *de trop*, was cruelly embarrassing. Nothing I did was right; and all the little *contre-temps* inseparable from travelling, were ascribed to my bad management, with sundry hints that John Hartland would have contrived things better. The sunshine of Hester's presence, however, supported me, and I did not feel all my impending ills till we arrived at Folkestone, and the party necessarily separated.

Briefly let me pass over the events of the next few weeks. I found the general established in his house in Upper Harley Street. My interview with him was not so stormy as I had anticipated; even when I told him of my determination not to marry his ward, he said I need not trouble myself—that I did not deserve her. He concluded I meant to marry old May's daughter, and in that case, he should cut me off with a shilling, and not even send me to India. I said I had not the least intention of it. So much the better, he replied, for he now had it in his power to give me a capital appointment in India, but not as a married man. I took the plunge at once, and told him of my engagement to Hester Dering. This was too much for his patience, and I must confess that, under the circumstances, it was no wonder. I will not repeat all the abuse he lavished on my adored Hester and myself, for a couple of jilts, the one as bad as the other. He said nothing should induce him to countenance such villainy and such treachery to my own cousin, John Hartland. I left the house under his severe displeasure.

My mother, to whom I confided my distress, could give me no consolation. My uncle, since my father's death and pecuniary misfortunes, was the arbiter of our destinies. Hester's parents would not hear of our marriage, and were exasperated at her giving up John Hartland, whose fortune was considerable. I was taunted on all sides with my three proposals, and not allowed even to see Hester. I wrote to her privately, through the medium of my sister Jane; but in reply to some desperately wild scheme of mine, tending to Gretna Green, living in deserts, working for our bread, &c., she wrote me a letter, which I thought selfishly cold and reasonable. In it, she advised me to do the only thing left for me, which was, to conciliate my uncle by accepting his assistance in the only way he would give it, and trust to time and constancy for the rest. I was so much hurt by this, as I considered, cold-hearted advice to leave her, and go to India, that I would not answer the letter. I took the advice it contained, however, and accepted the appointment, everything being so speedily arranged that I escaped all leave-takings, except of my mother, sister, and uncle. My heart seemed paralysed, and I scarcely felt even curiosity as to the effect of my departure on those who had lately so deeply interested me. I felt as if a part of my life was over—that it was the past, and I did not wish ghost or shadow of it to mingle with my future. And thus I began my career in India.

CHAPTER III.

Fifteen years of my life in India were over; another 'past' had closed behind me. The incidents of this time were so distinct, and so totally unconnected with the previous years, that it would not be difficult to believe that they scarcely belonged to the same individual. Soon, very soon after my leaving England, the death of my beloved mother took away almost the only link that bound me in intimate associations with home.

My sister Jane had been married not long before this event to John Hartland. Between him and myself there had never been much cordiality; but I was glad that my sister was suitably married and provided for. She wrote to me but seldom, and seemed as resolved not to tell me any news of people who had once so much interested me, as I was not to ask for it. My poor mother had been my correspondent, and I felt her letters were her occupation—that she was with me while she wrote, and her presence seemed with me as I read her letters. But with my sister it was different; hers were shorter letters, and apologies for want of time, and its being 'only half an hour to the post,' and the baby teething, 'and dear John waiting for her to go out'—all, in short, that so forcibly tells the absent he is the last of all to be attended to, that 'time' is to be had for everything but to write to him. This disgusted me at last, and the home-communications were 'few and far between' enough.

It has been necessary to state thus much in order to explain that after fifteen years, bronzed by a tropical sun, and with iron-gray hair, I turned my thoughts homewards, with scarcely the certainty of one friendly face to greet me, or one hand to clasp mine. The desolateness of this coming home dismayed me; my thoughts turned vividly to the past, and I forgot the flight of years. The general—I omitted to mention him—was still living, but almost childish. It was understood that he would leave all he had to the Hartlands, who lived near him. To this I was tolerably indifferent by a singular event, a history in itself. I had become possessor of considerable wealth, bequeathed to me by a native of high caste, to whom I had been enabled to render some services. Then it was that I felt that longing desire for *home* in the abstract, which in the reality was so dreary to me; and then it was that the singular fact of my triple engagement came back upon me, and I took a somewhat hazardous resolution: I wrote a letter to each of the three women to whom I had been betrothed. Reader with the silken curls, do not smile and shake your head. I did this seriously and candidly. I knew not what had become of either of these women, who had in turn engrossed my youthful fancy. Strangely enough, not one trace had I of their destiny; but giving my simple blushing May-rose the prior claim, I wrote to each, offering my hand, if they, that is, either of them, chose to accept it!

It was some puzzle to me how to get the letters conveyed to them; but a lawyer friend who was sailing for England, and to whom I confided the delicate mission, furnished with what slight clues I could give him, undertook to find out 'the parties,' and to communicate to me the result.

This was something for me to look forward to; I had put my destiny out of my own power, and that strong life of the affections, in which alone I could live, clung rather to these old associations than to any new ties. I had acquired the habit, too, of waiting, I will not say patiently, but of looking forward as those only can do who live in colonies, and with whom every transaction depends on a distant post; the answer to the simplest question or the commonest decision being a matter of months of waiting. This habit of looking forward to a distant day is only learned in banishment, and perhaps it makes the time pass more quickly. At last a letter arrived from Williamson; I eagerly tore it open, and found two enclosures, sealed, and addressed to me. There was one in a hand I recognised instantly, even though its character was changed: it was that of the May-rose; but a much freer, more careless hand than formerly, with inordinately long tails to the *y*'s and *g*'s. I gazed long on the superscription, remembering all the neatly written notes, on pink paper, that had once so gladdened my eyes; then I looked at the seal, and tried to guess the contents. The seal had a widow's lozenge on it. Next, with a strange perversity to prolong suspense, I examined the other letter. It was not the writing of Hester Dering; that I saw at a glance; it was that of Justina. I held one in either hand, as if weighing them in a balance, and wondered, as I had wondered fifteen years ago, which of the two would decide my fate, hesitating which I should open first. The first love prevailed, and I tore open the seal of Rose's letter. It was as follows:

'Who would have thought it! So you are really and truly in the land of the living, and not entirely used up in that horrid hot country!' (I glanced at the signature, it was 'Rose'—or I should have thought it more likely to be Justina.) 'Pray, come back again,' it went on. 'Je suis enchantée, ravie, delighted, charmed to hear you are likely to be in town this season, which will not be quite over, if you make haste. I did not go out all last year, because I was in weeds, and was in such very bad spirits, of course, after my bereavement. Ah, my dear friend, great has been my affliction, and so very kind of him to leave me so well off. But that will not influence you, I am sure, as you did not know it, and shall not make any difference to me, though I cannot afford to marry upon nothing, as I have my position to keep up, and all that, and don't much like a mere Mr, after being Lady Coddleton, though only a knight. But I remember you very well, and never can forget—and you promised to be good-looking, though such a boy then; and I was very unhappy, and you don't deserve I should forgive you. I am sorry for one thing in your letter, which is, that I must send a positive answer, for who knows what you have turned out? As to myself, I am very much admired, and always taken for twenty-five; so I should not like you to mention to anybody, whether it is off or on, how long ago it was since we met. So, my dear friend, if it must be positive, my answer is—— O dear! I can't quite commit myself by saying yes. So, pray excuse me; and with kindest regards, believe me, yours affectionately, ROSE.

'*P. S.*—I forgot to mention that I have one sweet little angel-pledge of married life. She is a wild bird, and very tall of her age.'

'Good heavens, how altered!' I exclaimed, throwing down the letter. 'Is this the simple, artless Mayrose! Surely more than fifteen years of worldliness and folly must have passed over that heart. She is free indeed, but what a blessing she has not accepted me!'

Before I read the answer from Justina, I turned to Williamson's letter. Vain had been all his inquiries after Miss Dering—all that he knew was that she had gone with her father and mother to live in that very vague locality—'abroad'. Some one had told him that she was dead—another, that she was married, and it was her mother who was dead—then he heard it was her father who was dead—and last, and with more probability, that her mother was dead, and her father had married again; but of herself, personally, he could learn nothing.

Let Justina's letter speak for itself:

'My dear Sir—In alluding to the days of sin and folly which you designate as "happy youth," I see too great a probability that you are still unconvinced of the great fact of man's utter misery. I am surprised at your thinking of so important an affair as marriage without an inquiry into the state of my soul, and it shews me the lamentable condition of worldliness you are in. I am happy to say that till last February twelvemonth I was allowed to multiply my transgressions by living to the world, so that, up to the moment of my conversion, I was misled by no false moral motives. A single sermon from that truly pious minister, the Rev. Samuel Smalley, shewed me the evil of my ways. If you can give me any satisfactory account of yourself, which I much fear, from your letter, will not be the case, I shall be happy to confer with you on the subject you mention when you return. I am still unmarried, but I devote all my time and means to the enlightenment of such unhappy friends who are still groping in darkness, in which I am aided by the truly delightful mind of Mr Smalley. A most interesting case has just fallen under our view—a worldly, beautiful, and rich widow, whose conversion under Providence we hope to effect, and which will be a bright jewel in the saintly crown of pious Mr Smalley and my humble self. The name of this daughter of Philistia is Lady Coddleton, a neighbour of mine in Hampshire. As to that unhappy darkened individual, the general, my late guardian, nothing will induce him to listen to any exhortations to improve his frame of mind, and the Rev. Mr Smalley has submitted to more indignities from him than I can mention without pain. As you ask for a positive answer to your proposal of marriage, I will tell you candidly that I accept it, and shall receive you (*D. V.*) when you arrive as my affianced husband.—I beg to remain sincerely yours, Justina Warner.'

I read this epistle through once, and I confess the effect it had on me was to provoke the heartiest fit of laughter I had known for many a day. I read it again, and was rather sobered by the announcement at the end; this was the only part of it that was characteristic—the only part I could realise as being written by the lively, high-spirited brunette. I remembered well the scene at the ball, when she had taken my compliments *au pied de la lettre*, and almost insisted on my 'telling the general' on the spot. The same kind of nervous sensation came over me, and I again wished I had not 'committed myself.' Then I read the letter a third time, and failed to realise its contents. I could not imagine one word of it to have been written by Justina—the Justina of other times. I dwelt upon this so long, that from a sort of vague curiosity grew up a positive anxiety on the subject. I was anxious to see Justina again. I wondered if she had grown old-fashioned-looking and dowdy, and wore bonnets to match her letter—if she talked like it, and had left off slang. But the interest was of some use; it was a point to look to, in the uncertain, misty horizon of 'going home.' I thought even complacently of her change of ideas; with a little softening down, how delightful a woman might Justina be! Certainly, a dash of seriousness was just what she wanted; and if she had now a little too much, it was a fault on the right side. I felt obliged to Mr Smalley, or whoever had been the cause of it; and visions passed through my mind of some tokens of respect, in the shape of a present—should it be an inlaid writing-desk, or a shawl for his good old wife, or a set of splendid chessmen?

These thoughts engaged me during my preparations for a prompt departure and on the overland journey home. As I got nearer England, the old memories and associations revived more strongly. I told myself again and again that fifteen years had passed, and everything was changed; but all that intervening time with me had been spent among other thoughts and feelings; nothing in my own life had acted upon the previous impressions; it was completely separated from them, and I felt as if the other two parts should fit into each other, just leaving out the intermediate fifteen years of my Indian life, as though they had been only a dream. I had not a single intimate friend in England, and I have related how entirely I was without correspondents. My first visit was to my sister, Mrs Hartland, to whom I had written on arriving. They all seemed very glad to see me, and I soon made myself at home. I asked many questions about old friends, and especially about Hester Dering. All that Jane knew was that her mother was dead, and her father had married again. The step-mother was an atrocious woman. Hester had borne with her long, and yet had refused many good offers of marriage. At last, she went to live with her aunt, and my sister had for many years lost sight of her.

I felt a delicacy in mentioning Hester to Hartland. Nothing should have induced me to name her; but when we were left alone after dinner, he suddenly exclaimed, with all the simplicity of a child: 'By the by, Gerald, what confounded mistake of yours was that about Hester Dering? Why didn't you marry, after all? She was a deuced nice girl, at that time, I remember.'

After this, I did not scruple to try and get some information from him on the subject; but he knew nothing in addition to what his wife had told me, except that her father had had a terrible 'smash' in his affairs, and had died suddenly. Neither John Hartland nor my sister had any acquaintance with Lady Coddleton, beyond knowing she had taken a house in the neighbourhood for the summer months. I found they were not even aware of her identity with the Rose May of my early days, and I did not enlighten them. Of Justina, they told me much; and I soon discovered the information was tinctured with a little jealousy of her great interest with the general. They both disliked her in their different ways—Jane, because she had a vague idea that she stood in the way of the preferment of herself and children; and John Hartland, because she had once caricatured him in the hunting-field.

I therefore took all they said with the allowance of a heavy discount for the general's disputed purse; and in my own case, I observed that as soon as they had ascertained I was more than independent (how much more, I did not divulge), and had no designs on the inheritance, they grew quite fond of me, and were delighted to see me back. A rich bachelor-uncle from India is an acquisition not to be despised in a family of growing-up daughters.

Justina Warner had taken for her abode an estate of about two hundred acres, called Whitethorns, adjoining that of the general. She had at first had a model farm, and kept the land in her own hands, trying every variety of invention in patent implements, and infallible plans for improving the soil; but there was no patent to make the crops come up and the corn ripen three weeks after it was sown; and she got tired of staying so long in the country. She built a school, and for two whole months, persevered in attending to it herself, and actually cut out with her own hands the pattern of the Red-riding-hood capes, in which the girls were to be picturesquely attired. Then her engagements interfered, and it grew to be a Sunday, and not a week-day school. Then the season came on, and she must go to town, so that a schoolmistress was hired to supply her place; and perhaps the little scholars did not lose very much by the exchange, although they were allowed to say *coold* and *shoold*, t-o, *toe*, and p-u-t, *put*, making it rhyme to *but;* and though their missing *h*s were not always called for.

Fortunately, before her property had become seriously impaired by experimental farming, a tenant was found for the estate; and heartily tired of playing the squiress, Justina went to Paris, Rome, Naples, and Vienna, never missing London seasons, and all their dissipations. After an absence of some years, she had returned to Whitethorns, but it was not there that she had received and answered my proposal from India; she had received it during a visit to Cheltenham, which had become a favourite place of resort to her, since she had, as she said, 'given up the world.'

Although I had been very impatient and curious to see my affianced bride, yet strange as it may seem, I continued at my sister's, within a few miles of Whitethorns, for several weeks before I could make up my mind to present myself. I felt that it was inevitable, but I also felt it was very much as if I had to pull the string of a shower-bath, or touch the wire of an electrical machine.

My long residence in India had greatly increased my indolent predilection for 'a quiet life;' and it seemed to me that, in returning to the associations of my boyish days, I returned to my uncomfortable sensations of boyish shyness.

It was rather a relief to me, therefore, that some indispensable business called me to London, from whence I meant to go at once to the general's; and when there, of course, pay my devoirs to Justina. I was escorted to the railway station by a whole bevy of nieces and nephews, and had multitudes of commissions to execute for them all—from riding-hats and feathers of the last wide-awake fashion for the elder girls, to the largest Noah's Ark that ever was made for little Teddy, and a rocking-horse with a real skin for Jem.

THE BRITISH SOLDIER—HOW AND WHY HE ENLISTS.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that never until now has there been a volume containing an authoritative account of the British army, in relation to its strength, formation, organisation, pay, food, dress, barracks, garrisons, encampments, education, hygiène, and general government. True, there have been histories in great number of the achievements of the army; treatises on war, fortification, and gunnery; manuals of discipline, drilling, and tactics; and pamphlets and articles on some or other of these topics—but no regular and systematic book which would shew the internal working of this great and singular system. The nation has supported, by large annual grants, that which has hitherto been but little understood by the tax-payers. All the great countries of Europe—France, Russia, Prussia, Austria, and even Sardinia, Belgium, and Spain—possessed works of recognised authority on military administration; England was the exception. When Lord Panmure was Secretary of State for War in 1857, his lordship's attention was drawn to this deficiency by Lieutenant-colonel Lefroy, Inspector-general of Army Schools; and at his suggestion, Mr Fonblanque, of the commissariat department, undertook the preparation of a new work. This work being finished, it was submitted to General Peel, Lord Panmure's successor. Mr Fonblanque found, to his surprise, that the volume could not be published under official authority unless he would 'consent to eliminate from it the passages involving criticism, discussion, or censure of existing institutions.' This he very properly refused to do, as being contrary to the spirit of the original instructions given to him by Lord Panmure, and likely to defeat the very object of the book. He therefore published it on his own responsibility, rendering great national service in so doing.* The subject is altogether a remarkable one. 'A glance at a soldier's life will shew how in every stage of his career he is brought under the immediate influence of administration; how it adopts him for its own from the very hour he enlists as a recruit, to the last moment of his military existence. It trains him in youth, it supports him in manhood, it comforts him in age; it watches over him at home and abroad, in peace and in war, and follows him through the varied scenes of his life, in garrison and in camp, on the march and in the bivouac, on the battle-field and in the hospital. To the cares of administration he owes the clothing he wears, and the food he eats, the arms he wields, and the bed he sleeps on. Administration at length conducts the maimed and worn-out soldier into his peaceful and honourable retirement, and performs the last offices over his grave.'

Civilians marvel that men can be found to go 'soldiering,' so small is the pay compared with the sufferings often endured. If we look to the class of men from which British soldiers are mostly taken, the marvel will cease. England can scarcely be deemed a military country, in reference to the prevailing sentiments of her inhabitants. In Europe generally, there are 12 soldiers to every 1000 inhabitants; in Russia, it is as high as 14; in England—or rather the United Kingdom—only 8, even after the great increase of the last few years. We have fewer soldiers in relation to population than any other great European state. Through many combined causes, which John Bull would be very glad to ferret out, the British army costs *per man* far more than that of other countries; it is, on an average, L.52 per man per annum; whereas the continental average varies from L.38 in Belgium, down to L.13 in Russia. It seems strange to read this, and at the same time to read about soldiers and their 'sixpence a day;' and it has required all Mr Fonblanque's cleverness to disentangle the various modes in which the money goes.

Leaving altogether out of the inquiry the military officers of all ranks, as well as the cavalry, the artillery, the engineers, the military train, and such 'crack' foot-soldiers as the Guards, let us confine our attention to the great body of the army, the privates of the line regiments, on whom, after all, our main reliance is placed. There are just one hundred of these line regiments (each designated by a number, and some by an additional title, such as 7th Fusiliers, 32d Foot, 78th Highlanders, and so forth); some consist of more than one battalion; and as the full strength of each battalion includes 900 privates—besides about 180 officers, sergeants, corporals, &c.—there are now about 120,000 'common soldiers' of the line regiments. True, a great number of these are at present, under exceptional arrangements, serving in India, and are paid for by India instead of by England; but this need not affect the details now under notice.

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* *Treatise on the Administration and Organisation of the British Army, with especial reference to Finance and Supply.* By Edward Barrington de Fonblanque, Assistant Commissary-general. 1858.

In what way, the reader may ask at the outset, are the 'common soldiers' collected to form a British regiment of the line? The Queen must not have an army at all, without the annually expressed consent of parliament; and she cannot pay a single shilling to her soldiers without an annual parliamentary grant. Even with this consent, and this grant, she cannot compel her subjects to become soldiers. On the continent, two systems, of conscription and impressment, are adopted, to obtain men for military service. In England, voluntary enlistment alone is tried, with the occasionally exceptional rules concerning the militia, which need not be touched on here. The enlistment being voluntary, it is found by experience that the middle classes furnish scarcely any soldiers for the ranks. Nearly all are humbly born and uneducated, and many are among the 'loose fish' of society at the time of their enlistment. It was found, a few months ago, that of 73,000 privates of the line regiments, only 2000 had acquired a fair knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic; 20,000 could neither read nor write in the smallest degree; 13,000 could read, but not write. The officers and the privates in the British army are separated by a wider social gulf than in any of the continental armies. This arises from a double action and reaction; the poor and ignorant enter the ranks because the advantages are only sufficient to attract members of their class; and the middle classes shun the ranks, through a dislike of companionship with the lowly born. A private may become a corporal, and then a sergeant; but there he stops: the higher grades are 'commissioned;' the 'commissioned officer' is supposed to be a 'gentleman;' and the military 'gentleman' will not associate with non-commissioned officers or with privates. So strong is this social barrier, that the Queen's command has not yet been enabled to break it down. During the Crimean war, when the conduct and situation of soldiers attracted so much attention, public opinion prevailed on the authorities to make this indulgence—to give commissions to sergeants and corporals who had won the admiration of their officers by exemplary conduct in the field and in the barrack. These commissions conferred on the men the grades of ensign and cornet, which are, of course, the stepping-stones to those of lieutenant, captain, major, &c. Now, an ensign or a cornet always takes rank among the 'gentlemen' of conventional English society; the sergeant, when promoted, finds himself among men whose birth, education, tastes, pursuits, and conversation are different from his own; he finds he has no companions, no one with whom he can converse on easy familiar terms; and, even if the other officers do not adopt the cutting process of 'sending him to Coventry,' he nevertheless feels a sort of isolation very difficult to bear. Many experienced men foretold this result; and their anticipations have proved correct. The non-commissioned officers—sergeants and corporals—express no wish to accept commissions; the higher military dignity is to them a small consolation for the loss of personal comfort. On one occasion, a few months ago, five sergeants in succession declined this promotion when offered to them; they preferred such situations as messengers at the Horse-guards, which would not raise them to the perplexing rank of 'gentlemen;' a sixth, who did accept the commission, was afterward heard to say that he was 'perfectly wretched.' During the Crimean war, while the British army was in Bulgaria, a commission in the Guards was refused by *fifteen sergeants* in succession. 'Surely,' says Mr Fonblanque, 'there must be something defective in our military institutions, when that which should be the soldier's highest ambition becomes to him not only a matter of indifference, but of positive dislike and injury.' The attempt has failed in the few examples of recent years; and it is likely to fail so long as the ranks are filled almost wholly by low and ignorant men. On the continent, the middle classes are more fully represented among the common soldiers—partly because soldiering is a more favourite occupation than in England; and partly through the system of conscription, which takes very little note of the grades in society. There are thus men of good family and respectable connections in the ranks of the French and other continental armies; and to these men there is always a fair chance of rising in social position, seeing that one-third of all the vacant commissions are bestowed upon such non-commissioned officers as are qualified to hold them. Nor does it stop here; if the private may become a sergeant, and the sergeant an ensign, so may the ensign rise to be captain, colonel, general, field-marshal. French soldiers cherish this emulative thought; English soldiers never think on the matter at all—an impassable chasm seeming to them to separate the grade of sergeant from all beyond. So fixed is this state of things, that a very long period of time, and a series of extensive changes, would be necessary to produce a closer and more healthy connection between the officers and the privates of the British army. Many of our energetic reformers assert that the honours, pay, promotion, and privileges of military officers are retained by the aristocracy for their sons and nephews, through the courtly and parliamentary influence of the House of Peers. But this is only in part true. It is not from the higher circles that the officers are chiefly obtained. The upper section of the middle class is the one most fully represented; comprising the sons of the smaller gentry, merchants, surgeons, lawyers, clergymen, and the more wealthy manufacturers. It is only among the petted Household troops—Life-guards, Horse-guards, Grenadier Guards, Fusilier Guards, and Coldstream Guards—and a few other special corps, that the nobility is strongly represented among the officers. It may perhaps be proper to say that the aristocratic element of our army excludes to a great extent from the ranks the incentive of personal ambition, and thus lowers the moral influence bearing on our common soldiers; but then the word aristocratic must be interpreted in a wide sense, as meaning, not the wearing of a coronet, but that system of exclusiveness which, whether founded upon the test of birth, caste, or money, creates a powerful barrier between the governors and the governed.

As an Englishman is not compelled to become a soldier, there must be one or other of three motives to entice him into the ranks—patriotism, inclination, or poverty. As to patriotism, it must not be relied on as a steady resource. If England were invaded, there is little doubt that many men would step forward, urged by a generous enthusiasm to defend the country in [illegible] time of danger; but in the ordinary state of [illegible] the patriotism of few men would be ardent enough [illegible] encounter the cold 'red-tapism' of the [illegible] ranks. During the Crimean war, when soldiers [illegible] much needed, the 'counter-jumpers' of our large [illegible] the young men employed in selling laces, tapes, [illegible] and muslins, were reproached for their [illegible] they were told to leave such small work in the [illegible] of women, and to march to the field with musket [illegible] bayonet. The drapers' assistants had, [illegible] good answer to give—'Patriotism is all very [illegible] but until you can insure to us the prospect of rising to higher grades in the army by good conduct, we have no inducement to seek companionship with the class of men whom we see following the recruiting sergeant through the streets of London.' Patriotism being too uncertain a resource, the next is inclination. But this, again, is very fitful and unreliable. There are men who have a predilection for a life of adventure —a dislike for settled pursuits and fixed habits—a roving, restless disposition—a taste for the glitter and pomp of war, with its flags and trumpets, its medals and clasps, its glories and renown; and our army always contains some such spirits; but the number is small. There then remains the last and real incentive, poverty. Under the present regulations and organisation of the British army, the ranks would be very insufficiently filled were it not that there are men who are very poor. Their poverty may or may not have been brought about by their own misconduct; but the result is nearly the same so far as regards soldiering. The poor man becomes a recruit, not because a common soldier is well paid, but because he can at least procure food, clothing, and shelter, without much thought, so long as he obeys the orders given to him. Such men, as we know by painful experience, are miserably deficient in education; as a consequence, they would not be fitted for officers' duties, even if our system permitted promotion from the ranks; and thus one evil intensifies another.

Poverty, then, is the great storehouse for supplying British recruits; and the war-authorities measure the influence of this poverty in all their calculations. Their problem is: 'How much can we offer, in order to attract recruits?' They offer to the poor or the reckless man, in the first place, a sum of money immediately on enlistment, under the name of *bounty;* they offer, in the second place, besides food, lodging, and clothing, a small daily sum of money, under the name of *pay;* lastly, they offer a prospective provision, after a fixed period of service, under the name of *pension;* and according to the willingness or unwillingness of men to come forward, so are these offers of bounty, pay, and pension contracted or expanded in liberality. If the need be pressing, and the recruiting goes on slowly, two other relaxations are made—youths are admitted at an earlier age than before, and men of lower stature than are ordinarily taken: a net with smaller meshes is used to catch younger and smaller fish. During one period of the Peninsular war, when the demand for men was great, the 'standard' or minimum for a soldier's height was reduced so low as five feet three inches for adult men; youths were admitted at sixteen years of age; and the bounty rose to L.24 for one adult who would consent to serve for life. Never since the year 1812 has the system been at such a high pressure as this.

Under the Adjutant-general of the Forces, there are nine recruiting establishments in the United Kingdom; each comprising an inspecting field-officer, an adjutant, a paymaster, a staff-surgeon, and a superintending military officer detached from military service. Besides these establishments at nine large towns, there are about thirty other recruiting head-quarters. The officers send their recruiting-parties to the different towns and villages, making known the terms of enlistment, and inviting recruits to join the army. On arriving at the head-quarters of the district, the recruit undergoes an examination by the staff-surgeon, and, if approved, he is sent before a civil magistrate to be attested. The paymaster next pays him the amount of bounty agreed upon; and the young recruit is despatched to join the regiment to which he is appointed. Until a few years ago, a recruit was often tempted by the bounty, under the impression that it was all receivable in money; and his first experience of military-life was too frequently a sense of disappointment, and a suspicion of having been duped, on finding that the bounty was intended to cover every expense connected with his enlistment up to the time of his being sent to his regiment, and further to defray the cost of his clothing and necessaries—deductions carefully kept out of sight until the engagement was complete and irrevocable. We have at any rate improved in *this* particular; whatever be the bounty named, the recruit receives it in cash. Nevertheless, all is not quite candid and above-board. The recruiting-sergeant mixes with the peasantry at country fairs, and with labourers and workmen in alehouses and other places; he descants on the glories and honours of war, and paints the soldier's life in colours far too bright. Many a recruit regrets the step he has taken, ere one week has passed; but the magistrate having attested, and the paymaster having paid the bounty, he is irrevocably a soldier, and will be treated as a deserter if he absconds. Of all the number who offer to enlist, about one-third are rejected for unfitness, in health or other particulars. Of 133 soldiers, considered to present a fair average of the whole British army, it was found that 82 had been husbandmen, labourers, or servants, 41 artisans, and 10 shopmen or clerks. But this ratio is believed to vary, according as distress more heavily attacks the agricultural or the mechanical population at the time of enlistment. Artisans are more intelligent and teachable than country rustics; but they are not as a whole so healthy; and it is found well to have a mixture of both. Ireland supplies more soldiers, in proportion to her population, than England, owing chiefly to the greater amount of poverty; but it is surprising how nearly equal the English, Scotch, and Irish become in soldierly qualities, after being for an equal length of time under efficient commanders.

We shall probably take an early opportunity of describing the arrangements connected with the food, dress, lodgment, culture, recreation, health, pay, and pension of the common soldier.

'THE DOMESTIC INSTITUTION.'

The 2d and 3d of March 1859 were great days on the Savannah race-course, which is pleasantly situated in a quiet wooded nook about three miles from the city. A great sale came off there on these days, which attracted numerous buyers from all parts of the south. 'There was the Georgia fast young man, with his pantaloons tucked into his boots, his velvet cap jauntily dragged over to one side, his cheek full of tobacco,' and his loaded revolver and bowie-knife ready for instant use, should they be deemed necessary to clinch any argument in which their owner might chance to engage. Rough backwoodsmen were there, loud and violent in speech, quick in quarrel, and sudden in action, swallowing raw spirits with a gusto such as that with which Brown, Jones, and Robinson would drain 'bittah beeah,' could they get it, on the continent. White-neckclothed gentlemen, with spectacles on nose, walked with Christian meekness among the crowd, strange contrast to the surly Legrees with whom they brushed shoulders, and exchanged words of greeting. In short, every type of southern slave-holding character was represented on the race-course, for it was not a horse-sale, as might be supposed from the locality, but one of human flesh and blood. It was a great auction of 'human chattels' which had drawn these varied hundreds from Louisiana, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, and the Carolinas. Mr Pierce M. Butler, of the free city of Philadelphia, had made 'ducks and drakes' of his available fortune, and his creditors pressing him, he was forced to realise on his southern investments —negroes on a rice-plantation near Darien, in the state of Georgia, and others on a cotton plantation on

St Simon's Island, an appendage of the same state in the Atlantic. In all, Mr Pierce M. Butler was owner of 436 human beings, which his necessities compelled him to bring to the hammer; and as they were all known to be 'likely nigger fellers' and 'prime gals,' the *bonâ-fide* product of an old family estate, the announcement of the sale created immense interest among the circle of traffickers in humanity. For weeks before the day of auction, nothing was talked of in the hotels of Savannah but Mr Pierce M. Butler's lot of negroes. Several days before the time, speculators began to arrive; and in order to afford every facility for their finding out the peculiar good and bad points of the living chattels, Mr Butler had the latter conveyed from his estates to Savannah some seven days before the sale. They were huddled into a large shed erected for the accommodation of the horses and carriages of those attending the races. No more attention was paid to their comfort than was absolutely necessary to keep them in a fair saleable condition. Their clothes-bundles were the only seats, tables, and beds which were allotted them—all that they had to keep them off the bare boards. Rice and beans, with an occasional bit of bacon and corn-bread, composed their food, while they here awaited anxiously their change of masters. Here, intending purchasers came and poked their ribs, looked at their teeth, felt their muscles, coarsely joked the women, and roughly handled the little children. The majority of the negroes had been accustomed only to rice and cotton planting; but some of them had been taught mechanical labour, such as coopering, carpentering, shoemaking, and smith-work—sufficiently well, at least, for the ordinary jobs required on a plantation; and the negroes did not fail to expatiate on their own good qualities when put through their paces by some more benevolent-looking individual than the others, whom they deemed it would be to their advantage to serve. Here is one scene, type of numerous others transpiring within that dreary shed.

Elisha, chattel No. 5 in the catalogue, had taken a fancy to a benevolent-looking middle-aged gentleman, who was inspecting the stock, and thus used his powers of persuasion to induce the benevolent man to purchase him, with his wife, boy, and girl, Molly, Israel, and Sevanda. The earnestness with which the poor fellow pressed his suit, knowing as he did that perhaps the happiness of his whole life depended on his success, was touching, and the arguments he used most pathetic. He made no appeal to the feelings of the buyer; he rested no hope on his charity and kindness, but only strove to shew how well worth his dollars were the bone and blood he was entreating him to buy. "Look at me, mas'r; am prime rice-planter; sho' you won't find a better man den me—no better on de whole plantation; do mo' work den ever; do carpenter-work, too, little. Better buy me, mas'r; I'se be good sarvant, mas'r. Molly, too, my wife, Sa, fus-rate rice-hand—'mos as good as me. Stan' out yer, Molly, and let the gen'lm'n see."

'Molly advances, with her hands crossed on her bosom, and makes a quick short courtesy, and stands mute, looking appealingly in the benevolent man's face; but Elisha talks all the faster.

"Shew mas'r yer arm, Molly—good arm dat, mas'r; she do a heap of work mo' with dat arm yet. Let good mas'r see yer teeth, Molly. See dat, mas'r—teeth all reg'lar, all good: she'm young gal yet. Come out yer, Israel; walk aroun', an' let the gen'lm'n see how spry you be."

'Then pointing to the three-year-old girl, who stood with her chubby hand to her mouth, holding on to her mother's dress, and uncertain what to make of the strange scene, Elisha continued:

"Little Vandy 's on'y a chile yet; make prime gal by and by. Better buy us, mas'r; we'rn fus-rate bargain."'

And so on went the poor slave, growing terribly in earnest as he proceeded; but the benevolent gentleman remained untouched, and turned on his heel, to drive a closer bargain elsewhere.

But this gaunt, comfortless shed was not without its picturesque features for those who could turn their eyes and thoughts a moment from the great mass of human misery which it contained. The bundles of the negroes, which were of all colours and sizes, were scattered in confusion over the floor. Upon them their owners reclined in sorrowful attitude, or, irritated by suspense, moved restlessly about. Here and there, little groups were engaged in earnest converse on their future prospects, or talking mournfully of their past comparatively happy lives, for they had all been born on the plantations from which the exigencies of their master demanded they should now be sold. Few of them wept, their open sorrow would have been but subject for jest and mockery in such a place. 'They were dressed in every possible variety of uncouth and fantastic garb, in every style, and of every imaginable colour; the texture of the garments was, in all cases, coarse, most of the men being clothed in the rough cloth that is made expressly for slaves. There was every variety of hat, with every imaginable slouch; and there was every cut and style of coat and pantaloons, made with every conceivable ingenuity of misfit, and tossed on with a general appearance of looseness that is perfectly indescribable, except to say that a southern negro always looks as if he could shake his clothes off without taking his hands out of his pockets. The women, true to feminine instinct, had made in almost every case some attempt at finery. All wore gorgeous turbans, generally manufactured in an instant out of a gay-coloured handkerchief, by a sudden and graceful twist of the fingers; though there was occasionally a more elaborate turban—a turban complex and mysterious—got up with care, and ornamented with a few bits of bright ribbon, or with glass beads. The little children were always better and more carefully dressed than the older ones, the parental pride coming out in the shape of a yellow cap, pointed like a mitre, or a jacket with a strip of red cloth round the bottom. The children were of all ages and sizes, from fifteen days old upwards. The babies were generally good-natured, though when one took it into its little head to yell, the complaint soon attacked the others, and a full chorus was the result.'

At length the first day of sale arrived. A dreary, wet, uncomfortable day for the buyers—a more miserable day for the bought. But never did Mr Bryan, the negro broker, a sharp, dapper, fierce, be-spectacled little man, appear in better spirits, as he moved through the crowd, exchanging a quick word to this one and that as he passed; never was the fat, florid, whisky-loving Mr Walsh, the auctioneer, more funny than when he mounted the stand.

The 'chattels,' it was announced, would be sold in 'families'—that is to say, a man would not be parted from his wife, or a mother from her young child, but grown-up sisters and brothers were not regarded as families. Lot after lot was disposed of amid brutal jests and laughter, at what were considered good prices.

Of the subjects of the sale, a few regarded it with perfect indifference, and never moved except to shew themselves at the order of the broker, and when they were knocked off, they descended from the pedestal without caring to look or inquire who was their future master. 'Others, again, strained their eyes with eager glances from one buyer to another, as the bidding went on, trying with earnest attention to follow the rapid voice of the auctioneer.

Sometimes two persons only would be bidding for the same chattel, all the others having resigned the contest, and then the poor creature on the block, conceiving an instantaneous preference for one of the buyers over the other, would regard the rivalry with the intensest interest, the expression of the face changing with every bid, settling into a half-smile of joy if the favourite buyer persevered unto the end, and secured the property; and settling down into a look of hopeless despair if the other won the victory.'

And so the first and the second day's sale went on and concluded, and 429 men, women, and children had changed hands, as if they had been so many cattle. Four hundred and thirty-six had been announced for sale, but seven had been detained on the plantation on account of sickness. One poor woman was sold with her baby only fifteen days old. Six days had she been in the shed before the day of sale. Her journey to Savannah must have occupied at least two days more, so that she must have been hurried from her bed to the market on the seventh day after her confinement!

Only one of the many touching incidents of this great human, rather, we should say, inhuman auction, will the space at our disposal permit us to mention. On Mr Butler's estates had grown up together from childhood Jeffrey, aged twenty-three, and Dorcas, somewhat his junior—in the catalogue of sale set down as chattel No. 319, and chattel No. 278. Well, these chattels had fallen in love, as human chattels cannot avoid doing:

Skins may differ, but affection
Dwells in white and black the same—

and had, in gross mimicry of their white owners, plighted their troth to each other. At the sale, Jeffrey was disposed of first. Hat in hand, emboldened by love, he sought out his young master, and told him the story of his simple passion.

'I loves Dorcas, young mas'r,' said the poor chattel, in tremulous accents, and with the big tear-drops in his eyes. 'I loves her well an' true. She says she loves me, an' I know she does. De good Lord knows I loves her better than I loves any one in de wide world—never can love another woman half so well. Please buy Dorcas, mas'r. We 're be good sarvants to you as long as we live. We 're be married right soon, young mas'r, and de chillun will be healthy and strong, mas'r, and dey 'll be good sarvants too. Please buy Dorcas, young mas'r. We loves each other a heap. Do, really, mas'r.'

But what are Jeffrey's hopes and loves to young mas'r? Nothing, the chattel suddenly remembers, and strikes out on a different tack:

'Young mas'r, Dorcas prime woman—A1 woman, sa. Tall gal, sir; long arms; strong, healthy, and can do a heap of work in a day. She is one of the best rice-hands on de whole plantation; worth 1200 dollars easy, mas'r, an' fus'-rate bargain at that.'

The last remarks tell more on young master than the former appeal; and Jeffrey is requested to bring out his sweetheart, and exhibit her good points, which he does with great glee, in the hope that they are really not to be separated after all. Young master is pleased, and promises to bid; but alas for Jeffrey's happiness, Dorcas is put up along with four of a family, and for them young master has no use. Another hour, and Dorcas sits in the long shed, her head buried in a shawl, and motionless as a statue; and Jeffrey, hat in hand, is once more in the presence of his master.

'I 'se very much obliged, mas'r, to you for trying to help me. I knows you would have done it if you could. Thank you, mas'r—thank you; but—its—berry, berry hard.' And here Jeffrey, unable longer to control his great grief, breaks down utterly, and covering his face with his battered hat, turns away sobbing like a child.

And now the sale is over, and a crowd of negroes have gathered eagerly round a white man, who is dispensing to each a dollar. These are the slaves who have just been sold, and the white man is their erstwhile master. Touching proof of the beauty and excellence of the 'domestic institution.' Happy, happy negroes! Kind-hearted, generous Mr Butler! Enviable nation, under whose star-spangled banner alone such sights can be witnessed!

At the conclusion of the sale, Mr Pierce M. Butler added up the proceeds, and found that he had realised 303,850 dollars; but never, until the great day of account—human heads indeed would be utterly incompetent for the task—will be summed up the awful loss of these poor black ones by the transaction. And but for the happy audacity of a correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, whose interesting narrative we have closely followed, while abridging, this great sale might have gone unrecorded, or been burked in a paragraph.

A PERILOUS HOUR.

I was apprenticed to a decorative painter, but being of a bold, danger-loving turn, I ran away to sea before my time was out.

After some years of knocking about, I got tired of a maritime life, and having married and determined to stick to the shore, I got work with a builder whose peculiar line lay in erecting tall chimneys. I had always a very cool head, and could stand on elevations that made most men dizzy, and so I was soon a favourite hand with my master.

We had on one occasion to fasten a lightning-conductor which had sprung near the top of a very high chimney, and Mr Staming chose myself and one James Colly to do it, as the most daring of his men. About half a dozen of us went that morning with a hand-cart, containing the necessary ropes, blocks, the kite, and a box or cradle. Having flown the kite, and dropped its line across the top of the chimney, we soon drew up a rope, at the end of which was a block, through which ran the line whereby we were to be drawn up.

Colly had only been married a fortnight; and as we stepped into the cradle, the men banteringly asked him if he hadn't a last dying speech to leave for his wife; and then Mr Staming having shaken hands with us, and bid us be cool and steady, we were drawn slowly up. It was known all over the town that the conductor was to be fixed, though as the day was not named, I did not expect we should have had many spectators; but as we got higher, and the view opened under our feet, I saw that the streets were already thronged with starers. Colly was very quiet; and when I waved my cap to the people, he said snappishly that this was no time for such folly, and that he thought I might think of better things than how to amuse these gaping fools, who, he dared say, desired no better fun than to see us meet with an accident.

I had come up in the best heart, thinking, indeed, nothing about the danger we incurred; but as we drew nearer and nearer to the top, and had nothing, as it seemed, belonging to this world near to us but this straining rope, I began to see the peril of the undertaking. What Colly thought of it, I don't know—he sat at the bottom of the cradle, never looking out, though I told him he would do better to keep his eyes about him, so that he might grow used to the height.

Good Heaven! what was this? Here we were within a yard of the top projecting coping, and still they were winding away without slacking speed in the least!, I guessed in a moment that they mistook our height, and that with the great purchase of that windlass the rope would be broken when the cradle came to the block. I sprang up, and catching the rope, climbed hand over hand to the coping. Colly, too, sprang up and followed me. He, too, got safe; and still they went on winding up, winding up, till the rope sung again with the strain there was upon it.

Then it snapped, and cradle, hauling-line, and the main rope with its block, fell down. Thus were we two poor men left in a most desperate situation.

Poor Colly was completely dazed with affright; and the moment he got on the coping, which was only a foot and a half broad, he called out: 'Where can I pray? where can I kneel and pray?' and so I said, very solemnly: 'Sit down, Jem; God will hear us if we pray to him sitting down.'

The colour of his face was of a transparent blue; and it was distorted and twitching, as if he was in a fit. His eyes were very wild, and drawn into a squint, and he couldn't sit steady, but swayed his body backward and forward, so that I felt certain that he must topple over.

'Come, Jem, lad,' I said, thinking to take the fright off him; 'it's bad enough, but it can be mended. Hitch up a bit, and put your arm round the rod—may be it will steady you.'

'Where are you? and where is this rod?' he asked in a very hollow voice, though he was looking straight at me, and the rod was only a foot or two to his left. By this I knew that he was gone blind with the fright; and self-preservation said, Don't go near him; but then I remembered his new-wedded wife, and that taking him all through, he was always a very decent fellow; and I thought how I should have liked him to have done if I had been in his case; so I determined to run a bit of risk in his favour. Of course, I durst not get on my feet; but working myself on by my hands, I got to him, and putting my arm round his waist, and telling him as cheerily as I could to keep cool, I got him with his arm round the rod. It had, however, sprung the stapling for five yards down, and was so loose that it swayed with him, and I expected any minute to see him falling head and heels down, and the rod tearing away with him.

There was great bustle down below; people were rushing round the yard and pushing to get in, but as yet there were but some score of men at the foot of the chimney, and, by close looking, I saw them put somebody on a board, and carry him gently away towards the engine-house. One of the men walked after with a hat in his hand; then I knew that somebody had been hurt with the falling cradle, and that it must be poor Mr Staming, as none of our men wore hats. Not a face was turned up to us. I learned afterwards that our men were so taken up with sorrow that so good a man and so kind a master should be killed, that for a while they had never a thought about us; and the people outside imagined that we had come down with the cradle, so thus were we left in total isolation for full twenty minutes.

While I was watching them below, feeling very sorry for my poor master, I was startled by a wild laugh from Colly, who began making catcalls, and yelling as if he was possessed. Then I knew, of course, that he was gone mad.

Even now I tremble when I think of that time; it was horrible to peer down the shaft, black and sooty and yawning, and scarcely less so to look outside and see a flight of pigeons sweeping round at considerably less height than we were. Then Colly—thank God, he was so dazed that he could not see me—called my name three times, as I sat fairly cringing in dread that his sight might clear, and with a ghastly grin, and chewing with his mouth, he began working himself towards me. I worked away from him as noiselessly as I could, with every hair of my head standing on end. He followed me twice round that horrid coping, making most hideous noises, and then being come a second time to the rod, he got an idea in his muddled head that I was fallen over, for he never lost a sense of where he was all through this trying time. Then he tried to get on his feet; but, at the risk of my own life, I could not let the poor fellow rush on certain death without one more effort; and I cried out for him to sit down, and he cowered down like a whipped dog all trembling. I suppose it had been put into his head that I was a dead man speaking to him.

That morning my wife had got a letter from her sister in Canada, and as there were parts we could not make out, I had put it in my pocket, intending to get our time-keeper to read it for me. It had a scrap of uncovered paper at the bottom; and by another good providence, I happened to have a bit of red lead-pencil in my pocket. I wrote on the paper, 'Get us down—Colly's gone mad;' this I shut in my tobacco-box, and was fortunate enough to drop just at the feet of a couple of men who were standing by the engine-house door.

Directly all was bustle to rescue us. They got the kite up again, and I watched it mounting slowly—slowly; and when the slack twine fell between Colly and myself, I took it in my hand and could have kissed it. Poor Colly, with his teeth chattering, still fancied I was a spirit, and I did all I could to favour that idea until they got another cradle up to us. Then having got him in, I scrambled in myself; and clutching him fast, I shouted for them to lower; and so we were got down, he wrestling and fighting with me all the way.

He was in a madhouse for some months, and then went to scavengering, for he never could face any height again; and I have never had the same clear head since that adventure.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM.

Beside the red camp-fire he slept,
His brother near him lay,
He dreamt of home, but waking, found
That home was far away.
'A happy dream I've had,' quo' he,
'Of the days were long ago;
I dreamt we were at home, boy;'
Quoth he: 'I dreamt we were at home, boy;
And together home we'll go.'

'Not so,' his brother then replied.
'Ere home we hie again,
Full many a danger must we brave
Of march and battle plain.'
But still the other answer made:
'Nay, brother; say not so;'
Quo' he: 'We're going home, boy,
For I did dream we were at home, boy,
And we'll surely homeward go.'

Upon the battle-field he lay,
His brother bleeding nigh,
His feet were toward the flying foe,
His face was toward the sky:
But ere that noble heart was still,
That life-blood ceased to flow,
Quo' he: 'We're going home, boy;
So, after all, we're going home, boy;
And together will we go.'

J.

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CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS.

THE Psalmist lays down three-score years and ten as the normal length of man's life. How strange it seems that, out of every hundred individuals who start together on the journey, in this country, only forty are in some localities able to accomplish more than a fourteenth part of man's earthly pilgrimage—that is, 60 per cent. die before they reach the age of five years. The Registrar-general's Report for the year 1858 affirms: 'Of the 23,420 deaths in the eight towns, 11,290, or 48·2 per cent., were under five years of age. This is a very high proportion, and shews that moral and physical agencies exist in these towns highly prejudicial to infantile life. *That this frightful mortality under five years of age might be greatly lessened, there can be no doubt,* as shewn by the simple fact, that its proportion differs widely in the several towns. Thus, in Aberdeen only 31·3 per cent. of the deaths were under five years of age; in Perth, 36·2 per cent.; in Edinburgh, 40·8: in Paisley, 46·3; in Greenock, 49·1; in Dundee, 49·6; in Leith, 49·8; while in Glasgow, 53·8.' Now, what would be thought if any other young animals died at this rate, and active measures were not taken to stop such a ruinous expenditure of life? The sheep-farmer thinks 2 or 3 per cent. a serious but probable loss among a flock of lambs; but when, owing to some sudden decrease of temperature or other unlooked-for circumstances, it reaches 8 or 12 per cent., the loss is considered ruinous, and scarcely heard of where the necessary attention is paid them. One gentleman who farms to a large extent in the north, has told us, that having on one occasion lost 40 lambs out of 250, he changed his shepherd, as no natural causes could account, even in this bleak country, for that high rate of mortality. Farmers tell us that injudicious treatment and neglect are sure to be exposed, sooner or later, by an unusual number of deaths, as, for instance, in the case of calves. A calf, whose future state is veal, is necessarily doomed to but a brief existence; but many are prevented from completing even this short career, for the injudicious treatment we have alluded to kills them, sometimes at the rate of 30 and 40 per cent. This cause of death, however, is not denied. Treat any young animal injudiciously, and it will die just as surely as a candle would be blown out if you took one with you in your vain search up the street for a policeman. And how sad it is to have this truth, 'uncared-for young animals die,' illustrated by the Registrar-general's Report of the mortality among our own species.

'And are not our young attended to?' you may exclaim. 'Go into the nursery; see the judicious arrangements laid down, after careful consultation between nurse and doctor; see the little white beds, the blazing fire, the wide window with a cheerful prospect, the meal of wholesome and carefully prepared food, varied from day to day, and every morsel watched as it enters the little red hungry mouths. Are our young not cared for indeed? Why, if, from time to time, one begins to pine, or gets some infantile disorder, how the whole establishment sympathises; the merry laugh and pattering footsteps are missed, and we feel how important an element of the domestic happiness the child was. How its mother lives in the nursery, and her cheeks whiten with watching; how the doctor's visit is longed for, and how exactly are his directions carried out. Our young uncared for, did you say? Why, the most valuable adult life is scarcely so cherished, and for the very reason which has been already given; it is because uncared-for young animals die.'

This, however, is only among the richer sort; uncared-for is a hard word; we mustn't think that our poorer sister's children are not tended to the best of her ability; but while, as a general rule, a child is *the* anxiety of the well-to-do mother, it is only one of the many which weary the poor man's wife. She has the little room to set in order, her husband's meals to prepare, the floor to scrub, the clothes to wash; she has not only to cheer and soothe the broken spirit of the bread-earner when he comes back at night, but to prepare his breakfast before he goes to work in the morning.

The infant clings to her breast, and hampers her exertions, at the same time as it makes her once ruddy cheek whiten and fall in, and acquire the prematurely aged look of the working-man's wife. While all this is going on, the elder child ceases to play about in the close with its companions, and sits on the little stool at the fireside with its head on its hand. It is noisy at night, and disturbs the father, who has to rise so early. Next day, it remains in bed, and the mother gets a neighbour to fetch a doctor. He comes; he can do but little save order medicine and constant watching, and supply from his own pocket a few little necessary luxuries. But he cannot be there always; he must away to others; he, too, is an earner of bread for little red hungry mouths. But then there is the mother, yes, and the other child and the husband for her to look after. Vainly she strives to give the sick one the share of nursing she feels to be its due, but often must it gape for a drink before it attracts the busy woman's attention, and often pine with some undefined want which *our* watchful mothers—mothers who have little to do but watch—would at once interpret.

The neighbours are kind and attentive; but time is precious even to them, and they have little else but attention and kindness to give. When the doctor returns, he sees it all won't do. No, it's of no use, you strong, patient, bread-earning father, your holding the little one on your knee, and trying to coax it with something in that coarse iron spoon. No doubt, she was, as you say, next to your wife in your affections, that watching her development was your study and delight, your one something to look forward to after the day's labour; yes, but she took ill in circumstances where the chances of recovery were as one to a hundred; she did not get the care necessary for a sick young animal; and she will be before morning a unit of the forty per cent. of all children born, say, in this town of Edinburgh, and dying before five years of age.

Now, how is this to be remedied?—how are we to help our poor sister in her difficulties, and be enabled to look her and the Registrar-general in the face? Some have such a vague idea of that functionary, that they seem to imagine his making the statement at all is as much as to say he accepts the responsibility attached; and if he does not mend matters, more shame to him. But there are fortunately others who take a more actively benevolent view of such matters, and endeavour to supply a remedy. Such are the gentlemen who, in various cities of the Queen's dominions, try to establish hospitals for sick children. This class of institutions is comparatively a novelty among us in Edinburgh. The first was set up in London so lately as 1852. They previously existed in St Petersburg, Moscow, Copenhagen, Belgium, Turin, and even Constantinople; two at Vienna, and two in Paris. In London, the Child's Hospital was begun on a prudential scale, as all such things should be: a house was rented, a few beds put up, a staff of doctors selected; and in the seven years of its existence, 1860 patients have been treated in these beds, while 49,100 out-patients have received advice and medicine.

The advantages of such an institution are numerous. First and chief is the alleviation of human suffering, and the reduction of that little account between us and the Registrar-general. Secondly, for giving additional opportunities for the study of infantile diseases, the importance of which is so great. Let us again quote from our severe adviser: 'It is the prevalent notion that the diseases of childhood—namely, measles, scarlatina, and hooping-cough, cannot be got too soon over; the great mortality from them occurs among children under five years of age, which shews how false such an idea is.'

Did you ever try to doctor a young child? How are you to detect the disease? By the tongue. Why, he won't put it out, coax him in the most approved style, and make the most extravagant promises of reward. His pulse—why, the little heart is fluttering like a bird at the sight of that great ugly man—Bogy come at last. Oh, it's of no use; order some gray powder, and call to-morrow. But see, some old doctor who has been studying children's maladies for years, how instinctively, almost, he appreciates the true state of things, as he compares in his mind the case before him with the mass of others in his memory. Now, let a young practitioner study at a hospital for sick children, and he would acquire knowledge which would not only be valuable to himself as property, but make him a 'real blessing to mothers,' and an efficient man of business to act between us and the Registrar-general.

Thirdly, as a training-school for nurses. The difficulty of obtaining good assistants for the nursery is notorious, there being generally a compulsory selection between a young and inexperienced woman and an ogress, who in years and manners is unsuitable as a companion for youth, and who probably has also some deeply rooted ideas on the subject of domestic medicine. How great a comfort in travelling, or in a lonely country-house, would a woman be whose inclinations had, in the first place, made her take to nursing as a profession, and who, trained in a child's hospital, was skilled not only in the management, but in the detection of disease. What a valuable friend and adviser she would be for a young and anxious mother, and how a few of them would reduce the balance against us at the Registrar-general's.

The advantages of such a charity are not, however, to be classed under a few heads; they multiply even as we think of them, and every year of its existence they will continue to increase. Surely, when vast sums are being spent in experiments upon rifled cannon and patent liquid fire explosive shells, to strengthen Britain against her enemies, this plan for preserving what has hitherto been her strength and wealth—the children of her people—will not want for supporters.

GERMAN LIBRARIES.

We have our library in Hohenbraten—a special English library, where, as I was informed, British periodicals and newspapers, the *Times* included, might be obtained. Having conscientiously got through a considerable amount of bad German reading, and finding the modern French literature of the railways somewhat unsatisfying food, I set out one morning to visit the emporium in question. Mustering my best German, I asked the boy in attendance whether he had any new English magazine.

'Ja freilich,' was the answer; 'wir haben Shambeer.' And he triumphantly displayed a six-month old part of *Chambers's Journal*.

'What else have you?' I inquired.

'Dere is Poonch, and Blakvode, and Colbroon, and Deekeen.'

The last two titles, I found, were conventionally understood to represent the *New Monthly* and *Household Words*.

'You have the *Times* also?'

'Ja wohl.'

So I paid my subscription, and then, for I was longing with a feverish thirst for news from India, I asked if I could have the latest *Times*.

It was already lent out, Master Gottlieb assured me.

'Then give me the latest you have.'

The boy handed me a quarto pamphlet, which, to my horror, I saw headed *Medical Times*. An explanation ensued. This unlucky paper, very interesting and useful in its way, no doubt, was all that the Hohenbraten Bibliothek had to shew for the mighty, the inimitable *Times*. 'There is but one newspaper in the world,' thinks the Englishman, 'and Russell is its correspondent.' It was a grievous disappointment, when one was longing to know how it fared with dear friends in the far-off land of war, to be put off with accounts of hospital operations—ah, too suggestive those!—and treatises on catarrh and indigestion. However, as the Germans say, 'if one can't dance, one must only play the fiddle;' so I made the best of it, and carried off a bundle of stale magazines. *Blackwood* is very old and polished Ebony indeed, when we get him, for each number has to run the gantlet of a reading-club at Munich before it reaches us; and all the three kingdoms know 'What he will do with it,' three or four months before we adopted denizens of Hohenbraten have any idea on the subject. *Punch*, too, like the liquid favoured by Mr Pickwick, is 'cold Punch' indeed ere we obtain a taste of its quality. But it is something in this far-off land to get it at all; and German periodical literature, of the newest, if not of the best, one can have in any quantity. Candidly speaking, I find it very inferior to our own, and also to the French. The tales in the German periodicals are usually immensely long, and insufferably tedious. I remember compressing one, which in the original occupied sixty pages, into four of an English periodical, where it formed a readable little story, but one by no means overburdened with incident. This reminds me that in the way of reprisals, any one who chooses is fairly entitled to pick up any stray flowers which he may chance to see gleaming amongst the dun dense masses of fallen leaves in the German literary Schwarzwald. From the Hohenbraten library, I got the other day a bound volume of an exceedingly popular cheap magazine. Looking through it, I recognised every tale it contained as translated *in extenso* from *Chambers's Journal* or *Household Words*, and this without the slightest acknowledgment of the source from whence they were derived, or even an intimation of their being translations at all. Three amongst them happened to be my own; and I must do the German translator the justice to say they were faithfully rendered, and quite free from those grotesque misconceptions of the original meaning which one commonly finds in French renderings of the English. If one's sugar, spice, and plums be stolen, it is some consolation to discover that the thief has had sufficient wit to convert them into a good, and not into an uneatable pudding.

The result of a close acquaintance with the modern light literature of Germany is by no means calculated to raise one's estimate of its value. I do not hesitate to assert that, with a few exceptions, such as *Soll und Haben*, and some of Berthold Auerbach's tales, a German novel is sure to be either dull or wicked, and very often both. That this is recognised by the Germans themselves may be inferred from the fact that translations form the staple commodity of their circulating libraries. 'My daughters have never read a German novel; I give them nothing but translations from the English,' was the speech, the other day, of a German mother; and she was quite right. In one of Miss Edgeworth's admirable tales, she describes a lady asking a French governess to recommend some suitable books for her children's perusal.

'Oh, certainement, madame,' says the instructress; 'il y a *Télémaque* et *Bélisaire*.'

The young ladies, however, had already perused these.

'Attendez, madame: oui—tenez—il y a *Bélisaire* et *Télémaque*.'

No other name was forthcoming from the storehouse of mademoiselle's memory. Something analogous is likely to befall the literary inquirer in the Vaterland; Goethe and Schiller, Schiller and Goethe, are the beginning and end of German letters. Some pretty fugitive poetry they have, no doubt; but is it equal, in either quantity or quality, to ours? There is scarcely an English magazine or journal of the better class, which does not from time to time publish verses regarded by us as ephemeral trifles, but which, in Germany, would make a reputation.

Style seems a matter utterly beneath the attention of the German magazine *littérateurs*. The lumbering construction of their interminable sentences is favourable to long-windedness; and assuredly they do not neglect the advantage. Whatever an English or a French writer of the present time may have to say, he will generally contrive to say it well. Like the Hermit, if he has but little here to tell, he does not make that little long. But your thorough-going Teuton, amid the fumes of his tobacco-pipe, will weave you a web of fiction as cloudy, as unsubstantial, and also as black and unsavoury as those. Like the clergyman of whom it was said, 'he preached for ten minutes, and then went on for fifty more,' Mein Herr shall compose you a story good for ten pages, but will be brought to a halt only by the end of his octavo volume.

The absence of humour is an essential characteristic of the German nature. We cannot compare for a moment the inane puerilities, the stale Joe Millerisms which move to laughter the solid, pipe-holding lips of Deutschland, with the fresh and sparkling wit of *Punch*.

The Tauchnitz edition of standard English works is a wonderful boon to British sojourners abroad. I purchased Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*, in five small well-printed volumes, for 7s. 6d., just when it first appeared in England at the price of two guineas. The English catalogues of the circulating libraries are very amusing. On what principle their selection of literature is made, I cannot say. I know only that amongst the latest additions of *new* works to my Hohenbraten library are—*The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, Burder's *Pleasures of Religion*, Sheridan's *Dramatic Works*, Maturin's *Sermons*, *Evelina*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*. Some of the titles appear in the catalogue funnily travestied. *Then Tausends a Jear* was tolerably intelligible, and *The Fetch of Bracon* could be understood; but *Sim the Scavenger*, by the author of *Emilia Wyndham*, *was* a poser. Such an incongruous juxtaposition of coarse and refined, high and low—St Giles and St James with a vengeance—was more than my philosophy could fathom; so, asking to see the volume in question, I found the title was simply the Teutonic version of Mrs Marsh's clever novel, *Time the Avenger*.

A German comedy is a very ponderous affair indeed—more doleful than a French tragedy, more tedious than a parliamentary blue-book. As to its wit—save the mark!—Sydney Smith himself would have grown dull beneath the soul-chastening infliction. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. I firmly believe that English literature, in its full extent, is the finest and richest in the world; and although it is good and pleasant to study other languages, and become acquainted with the various works contained in them, yet he who knows no other than his mother-tongue, will never, during the course of the longest life, be able to exhaust the treasures hidden in that ancient well of English undefiled.

MY THREE WOOINGS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.

While I waited at the railway station, a train in the contrary direction to the one for which I was waiting stopped at the station. There were no passengers to alight or depart, and it did not stop half a minute. I looked vaguely in at them as they looked vaguely out—it was again in motion; the hiss and the snort, and the grunt of the mighty animal, all a novelty to me, excited my attention; but through it all I heard a sound, a voice, a sudden exclamation, and my name was spoken in a tone I should have recognised anywhere. A face looked out from one of the carriages—it was *her* face—Hester's! I could not tell if she were altered; I only saw it was herself, and she was gone. The train whirled on, and I stood like one bewildered.

I was roused by the ringing of another bell, and a bustle among the porters; the up-train was arriving. My first impulse had been to start off in the direction in which I had seen Hester going; but the utter impossibility of a clue to where she was going stopped me. Still, I had seen her; she lived; she had recognised me, and this was such unutterable happiness, that I thought nothing of obstacles, and almost forgot my ticket and other necessary preliminaries before I took my seat in the train for London.

I had the carriage to myself till we stopped at the next station. There a britzska was waiting, in which sat a lady so muffled in furs and veils that I could not distinguish her features, for I had not yet become accustomed to the desolate feeling that I was unlikely to meet any face I knew. A footman and 'a little foot-page' were busied in bringing luggage; then there entered the carriage where I sat a dapper little French damsel, bearing a load of cloaks and cushions, which she arranged very carefully and daintily on the seat opposite to me, with a smiling 'Pardon, monsieur, si je vous dérange.' The page then handed her a basket, which might have contained a sleeping infant, so carefully was it passed from one to the other, and so warmly enveloped in a satin wadded coverlet. A sharp snarling bark betrayed its inmate—a very small white poodle, that appeared to entertain an unequivocal dislike to travelling, however commodiously his journeys were arranged. The bell rang, the dog barked, and the little French abigail was in great trouble.

'Toinette, Toinette, mamma wants you directly,' screamed a child's voice.

'What can I do with Mouton? He'll jump out if I leave him,' said she in veritable distress.

'I will take care of the dog,' I replied.

She scarcely stopped to thank me, but sprung out of the carriage to assist her mistress, whom I expected to find some helpless invalid, and scarcely changed my opinion as I saw the bundle of shawls and veils approach which I had seen in the britzska.

'No time to lose, ma'am; train just starting,' exclaimed the guard.

But the lady did not hurry her languid, haughty pace. I thought, however, that it was only in bravado, for she jumped into the carriage lightly enough. She drew back when she saw me, and said: 'Toinette, did I not desire you to get me an empty carriage all to myself?'

'Yes, miledi; but monsieur is so very *aimable*, and take such good care of Mouton.'

At this moment, my thoughts travelled many years back, and I remembered my first introduction to Justina, and her appropriation of my Skye terrier. I saw her again as she sat on the floor coaxing the wounded animal, and her long wild curls dropping to the carpet. I fell into a reverie, and forgot to observe whether the lady of the shawls and cloaks had lifted her veil. A tall lank girl, about fourteen years old, dressed in very short petticoats and a child's flapped hat, had also taken her place in the carriage by the side of Mamselle Toinette. This young lady was evidently not on good terms with Mouton, and frequently elicited a snarl by sundry sly pinches, an amusement she seemed greatly to enjoy.

'Look, ma—look how cross he is; how he hates me.'

'Zittie, darling,' returned the lady, soothing the snarling favourite—'Zittie, beauty! has zou got a naughty cruel sister!'

'La, ma! how can you talk so! Sister, indeed!'

'Rosamond, child, you are quite beyond me—you are so boisterous. I shall be so glad when your new governess comes. Toinette, have you got my salts? Dere den, sant we be glad, Mouton, zou love, sant we be left in peace?'

It was very strange, but in the tender accents, pronounced in a jargon supposed to be suited to canine comprehension, I seemed to hear a tone that vibrated in the past.

The languid, fine-lady voice in which she addressed her daughter dissipated the illusion, but it always returned when she talked to Mouton. 'Surely, surely, I had heard that voice.' I became quite anxious that she should raise her veil, and it was not very long before my curiosity was gratified. The thicker veil thrown off, there was a pink bonnet enveloped in a shower, or what, I believe, ladies call a *fall* of blonde; under that there were roses, and a fall of ringlets; under these there was a highly rouged cheek, then there was a double chin, for the lady was fat, unmistakably, unmanageably fat, in spite of staymakers. For one moment, I turned away almost disappointed; I had never seen the face before. My world was a world of strangers—if they were not friends of twenty years' standing, they were nothing to me—I had no acquaintances.

I was soon deep in the past, my thoughts following Hester Dering, whom I had so distinctly recognised, and was determined some way or other to trace. Again I was aroused by the tone of the fat lady coaxing her dog—she was looking my way too, and smiling. Her teeth were white and even; she really was a very fine woman, especially when the knot of her pink bonnet-ribbon rather concealed the double chin. That smile again—the cheek puckered into certain well-known dimples. Yes, I had recognised her! It was the May-rose, very full blown indeed; and the pale stripling girl at her side was her daughter. How strange it all seemed! She had not recognised me, and I resolved not to make myself known, unless she discovered me herself. I had the precaution, therefore, to disguise my voice—that sure and changeless token of identity, and began by making friends with Mouton, who received my advances rather sulkily, and eyed me suspiciously, as though detecting something amiss in my sudden huskiness. Sundry civilities then passed as to the putting up or letting down of windows, the interchange of *Punch* and the *Illustrated News*. Fair Rosamond was reprimanded for indulging in a loud aside to Toinette as to my personal appearance; my brown face and gray hair I heard discussed.

'Rosamond, Rosamond, be quiet. Oh, what a blessing it will be when your governess comes! Won't it, Mouton?'

Then turning to me: 'It is such a difficult age to manage; you would hardly believe how tall she is of her age, and how young she is!'

'I should hardly believe her more than six years old, to look at her mother,' said I.

'Oh, you flatter me: she is only just eleven—such a may-pole. Do you know this part of the country?' she continued, quite graciously. 'That large house on the hill is Sir Lindesay Wolsey's, a cousin of Sir William Coddleton's. Oh, I forgot'—with a languid smile—'you do not know me—Lady Coddleton!' and she gave a sort of self-introductory bend. I bowed, and felt I ought to say something; but as I was not prepared with a fictitious name, I said something about honour and pleasure, and then, rather *à propos* to nothing, asked if she knew whether [illegible] Warner's place was in this part of the country.

'Oh,' said she, 'do you know her? She is [illegible] neighbour of mine, and I see a great deal of her [illegible] the country. You know, one must patronise [illegible] country neighbours.'

I looked at the portly Lady Coddleton, not at [illegible] May-rose, and smiled internally at the idea of [illegible] patronising Justina Warner; in fact, I felt [illegible] angry at her presumption.

'When I knew Miss Warner,' said I, 'she did [illegible] require much patronising.'

'Oh, they say she was quite gay when she [illegible] young; but ever since I have known her, she is [illegible] a mere humdrum—no style, no fashion about her. [illegible] never saw such bonnets as she wears. And [illegible] meets nobody at her house but missionaries, [illegible] church preachers, and district-visiting old maids, and converted Jews, and that kind of people; nobody one ever saw before, or ever wished to see again. That odious Mr Smalley too!'

'Ha!' said I.

Lady Coddleton stopped, and seemed suddenly to recollect that I was a stranger; but once in the talking vein, it was not difficult to set her off again.

'Perhaps you are evangelical,' she said; 'and if so, of course you have heard Mr Smalley.'

'No,' said I—'no; I have only heard his name.'

'Of course, I dare say, you have heard he is going to be married to Miss Warner?'

'Married!' exclaimed I, quite startled out of my prudence. 'I thought—I fancied he was a married man.'

'Is he indeed? You don't say so!' said the lady, with the eager satisfied air of a gossip who has just got a new bit of scandal. 'Well, I always thought there was something sly and underhand about him; and I am *quite* sure he wears a wig. But I think, as a friend, somebody ought to tell Miss Warner.'

'Oh, pray don't think,' said I—'don't imagine I know anything about it, or about him. But why should Miss Warner be told?'

'O dear, I thought you knew that it is said she is going to be married to him. Nobody ever knew he was married before. Did dey, Mouton, ittie darling?'

She always softened off the edges of her speeches by a tender appeal to Mouton. I was rather astounded by what I heard, and had a very pardonable curiosity to hear more; but I was afraid of any direct questions, lest I should be interrogated in my turn. Miss Rosamond came to my aid.

'La! ma, it is not Mr Smalley at all that's to marry Miss Warner. Don't you know it's the new parson?'

'Parson! Rosamond, who taught you such a vulgar expression, and what should such a child as you know about it? Mouton is quite shocked at you.'

'Pray, let us have Miss Rosamond's news, however,' said I.

'No, I won't tell you now,' said the precocious young lady, 'though I do know a great deal more. Nurse Andrews told me; and you know, ma, her husband is Miss Warner's coachman.'

'So he is,' said Lady Coddleton with an air of conviction. 'Well, dear child?'

'Why, old Mr Fullerton has got a new curate at Stoke Leigh. Such a nice young man, nurse Andrews says he is; only he likes to be called a priest, and not a curate; and he has church ever so many times a day; and he won't dine out on a Friday; and Miss Warner wanted to convert him—I don't know what for, nor what to; and so Mr Howard de Lacy, that's his name—such a pretty name, is not it?—Mr Howard de Lacy has quite cut out Mr Smalley—and John Andrews is always going up to the parsonage with notes and game, and sometimes little baskets of fruit and flowers; and John Andrews thinks'——

The gossiping came to a sudden end by the stopping of the train. I was so anxious to avoid recognition that, after a very hasty offer of my services, which I scarcely waited to have accepted or declined, I quitted the carriage, feeling a strange sensation of relief in thus leaving the woman who had been the object of my early, and, as I then thought, my unchanging love. There was something humiliating in feeling myself, and seeing her, so altered. The change in her, the loss of the whole identity so complete—nothing left even to interest me. Simplicity and mere prettiness, had these been, then, the only charms she had? Now, she was an empty, vain, and vulgar woman. Oh, May-rose, would I had not seen thee again, thus overblown, thus divested of all bloom. These thoughts recurred, with others not less gloomy, as I sat at my solitary dinner at the hotel. The account I had heard of Justina was not pleasant, but somehow I was sensible of a certain feeling of relief as I recalled it. One thing was certain—her engagement, if such she considered it, with me was as yet unknown, and the vision I had seen of my beloved Hester made me long to be free again. I was rather annoyed at Lady Coddleton not having recognised me—was I then grown such an old fellow, such a

Grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore,

that I was not to be known again? I was not five-and-forty yet, but then the climate—the climate. A new idea came to me, which I was resolved to work out. I almost laughed aloud as it presented itself in various bearings, and then my constitutional shyness, which seemed to have returned upon me with almost boyish force, or rather weakness, made me look upon it with dismay. My idea was to act upon the change in my appearance made by fifteen years' sojourn in India, and to present myself, like a lover in a vaudeville, to Justina Warner as some other personage than myself. The difficulty was in the personage I should represent. After various cogitations, I resolved on a very matter-of-fact course, which was to write a letter to Miss Warner, introducing an imaginary friend of my own, and pleading indispensable business to excuse my own delay in visiting her at Whitethorns.

All was satisfactorily arranged—'Miss Warner would be delighted to receive any friend of mine,' and had fixed the day for my visit.

Behold me, then, rather nervous and very shy, disdaining a black patch, and trusting to my Indian bronzing for disguise, following the name of Mr John Wood into the drawing-room of Justina's house. There was a sound of many voices, and it was a relief to me to see quite a large party assembled. I gave my name to the servant, and a lady at the further end of the room rose and advanced to meet me. Justina Warner, was it indeed herself? The jetty and luxuriant hair which had been her chief characteristic was closely confined under a cap of almost Quaker-like plainness—there was a sharp angular look in her whole figure, and something alarmingly decided in her countenance. At the time I speak of, the fashion of female attire was full and flowing, even beyond the requirements of the strictly graceful—flounces, furbelows, and hanging sleeves were the order of the day: this made the absence of all such ornament the more conspicuous in Justina's appearance. She wore a black or dark silk dress, clinging close to her thin spare figure, which made her look like a very elderly charity-girl.

She advanced to meet me, and as she spoke, her voice reminded me so strongly of the past, that I was instantly alive to the necessity of disguising my own. There was one sudden, quick glance at my face, but it subsided into a blank coldness. I was provided with an ear-trumpet, and I wore spectacles. I could have wished there had been more feeling in the tone with which she shouted to me her inquiries after my health, and asked when she should see me at Whitethorns. Seeing she did not the least recognise me, I apologised for my own absence with great unction, and gaining courage to look round, I discovered in one of the party Lady Coddleton. This considerably complicated the 'situation;' but a sense of amusement came to my relief, and helped to free me from embarrassment.

Lady Coddleton bowed and smirked, and I took refuge by her side. Justina said: 'Oh, you know my good neighbour, Lady Coddleton, Mr Wood—will you take her in to dinner?'

Of course, I could do no less than bow acquiescence; and found myself with the over-blown May-rose by my side at the dinner-table, rather embarrassed by having to keep up my character of deafness, as she only required a listener, and I was afraid to trust my voice more than I could help, fearing it might be recognised.

Justina took the head of the table, and at her right hand was a tall, thin, youngish man, who had handed her in. His features were finely formed, and his countenance pleasing, though somewhat melancholy. The peculiar character of his dress made me immediately recognise him as the 'nice' young clergyman who liked to be called a priest.

'Mr Smalley *is* cut out indeed,' said Lady Coddleton to me confidentially. 'I do wonder which will say grace.'

I affected not to hear this remark, but bowed in polite deafness.

I was intently watching Justina, and observed a tall, stout, florid-faced man, with very black hair, whom I took for the butler, fidgeting behind her chair. She looked annoyed and disconcerted, and turned, as I thought, to give him some particular order about icing the champagne. His reply was in a low tone; and with an air of deference and humility, he laid his hand on his waistcoat, and raised his eyes to the ceiling, all of which I thought was an odd pantomime for a butler; but still more was I surprised to see him take the vacant seat at the bottom of the table, opposite to Justina, looking round with an air of meek triumph as he did so, and waving his hand in a patronising way to the tall thin man at Miss Warner's right, who forthwith said grace, and all sat down to table.

'Well, this is something new!' said my loquacious neighbour. 'Nobody ever sits *there* but the general; and now there is Mr Smalley sitting at the bottom of the table, and Mr Howard de Lacy at the top. Which is it to be, I wonder? How odd my meeting you in the train! But you have not asked after Mouton—poor, dear, little Mouton. I have brought him here with me. We stay till next week. I have brought the child too. Poor dear Miss Warner is always so kind in asking her and her governess too.'

'Soup?'

'No, thank you. You see I can talk while you eat your soup;' and thus she ran on, making me almost wish myself deaf in reality.

'Lady Coddleton,' said Mr Smalley blandly, from the end of the table, 'might I have the honour, the happiness of a glass of wine with you? Which do you take? Champagne?—not that I should presume to dictate.'

As he said this, he bowed over the table, and raised his eyes to hers in a very insinuating manner. I thought I saw a quick glance towards Miss Warner, as if to watch the effect on her; but she was earnestly engaged in talking to Mr Howard de Lacy, and the coquetry of Mr Smalley failed in its effect. Lady Coddleton bowed languidly, and preferred champagne. Still doubling himself over the table, Mr Smalley continued, raising the whites of his great round eyes to hers: 'May I presume to 'ope you are well taken care of? Is there nothing I can assist your ladyship to? and in all humilarty and sincerarty, might I solicit an introduction to your agreeable neighbour?'

Lady Coddleton did not look quite so disgusted at this address as I expected she would. Though a falling-star, Mr Smalley had been a star, so she introduced me to him, which I affected not to hear. I saw him bowing to empty space, while I pretended to be examining the dish opposite to me.

'Mr Smalley wishes to be introduced to you, Mr Wood,' said Lady Coddleton, again raising her voice.

I bowed this time in reply; and Mr Smalley said behind his hand to Lady Coddleton: 'Is your friend serious?'

She elevated her pencilled eyebrows.

'I mean,' he continued, 'is he a Christian?'

'Very fortunately, he is deaf,' said Justina Warner from the top of the table, 'or he might not approve such a question, made in such a public manner.'

The eyes were now thrown beseechingly at Justina.

'In all humilarty,' he began, 'I beg pardon, if I have offended; but I 'oped Miss Warner would have felt and sympathised with my anxiarty on meeting a stranger pilgrim in the land, to ask, in all sincerarty, whither he is bound—whether he is a brand—whether he is a sheep or a goat.'

Justina rather sharply answered: 'There is a time for all things, Mr Smalley.'

And I could not help remembering a time when she would have laughed outright at such a speech.

Nothing very interesting occurred during dinner: Mr Howard de Lacy scarcely spoke above a whisper with Justina. When the ladies retired, Mr Smalley took a vacant seat next me, providing himself with two dishes of candied fruits within reach, and helping himself to bumpers every time the bottle passed.

I found De Lacy frank, though timid, intelligent, though with strong prejudices. He interested me very much; and the more so, as I had been prepared for a mere priestly coxcomb—a species of vanity most especially abhorrent to me—because its meanness and littleness appear doubly despicable while sheltered under a sanctuary that is in itself inviolable.

We were the first to obey the summons to the drawing-room, and continued in conversation as we entered. He grew abstracted, however, and I saw him colour as he glanced to where Justina sat. 'That is all right,' I thought. 'I will try and find out if he cares for herself or her fortune.'

Seated at a round table, a fair assemblage of pink cheeks and white muslins, were busily engaged in sewing and making a variety of coarse garments for poor people; nor these only, but an infinite choice of what are called fancy articles for a bazaar. Not that I found this out by intuition, for I was considerably puzzled as to what was the possible object of their employment—the strange-shaped pieces of red cloth I saw cut and stitched, and the small dolls in very unpicturesque nudity. Then the confusion of tongues that prevailed, the constant appeals to Miss Warner. 'Oh, Miss Warner, where shall I find anything to make a sack for my chimney-sweep? He is such a lovely chimney-sweep!' 'Three flannel petticoats and six pen-wipers, a baby's cap and a spectacle-wiper: is that enough for one lot?' 'And the bouquets! we'll make them pay plenty for the bouquets; half-a-crown apiece—shall we, Miss Warner? and take no change?' Justina sat a little apart, and was evidently bored. I noticed all this as we entered the first drawing-room, which opened into the one in which they sat, before our entrance was perceived. De Lacy was standing irresolute, not venturing to approach Justina, when the further door opened, and a voice was heard:

'Ah, my young friends, how lovely is your diligence in the cause of chararty! O that the worldly-minded and the scoffers would but consider and bring it home to their own buzzoms!

How doth the little busy bee'——

At this period of the discourse, Justina rose suddenly, and walking towards the place where Mr de Lacy and I stood—'I daresay,' said she somewhat abruptly to me, 'you have no such things as fancy-fairs in India, and I think our mutual friend told me you had been with him in India.'

I felt myself colour as I said: 'Yes; we were very much together. Our Indian ladies are much too indolent and languid for anything of the sort. To be busy, is quite an unknown word with them.'

'Be kind enough,' she continued, 'to tell me something real and practical as to the state of their minds. I have had it in contemplation to raise funds and send out missionaries among the ladies of Calcutta.'

A glass-door leading to the lawn stood open, and Justina led the way into the garden, leaving her young fancy-workers to themselves and their own counsels.

'But how would you choose your envoys or missionaries, that they should be different from those of the established church, and what authority would they bear among a class much the same as your own in England?' said De Lacy, mildly interposing. He had joined us as we passed out.

'Ah, yes,' said she, 'it would be difficult to choose them. Why should they not be women?'

He laughed outright. It was a hearty laugh, without the least tincture of a sneer, and I liked him for it. The infection caught me, and I laughed too.

'What! you, too, find my notion merely ridiculous,' said Justina, but not angrily.

'Forgive me,' said I; 'but there is something to me, an old Indian, irresistibly ridiculous in your charitable notion of sending out a freight of governesses for the fashionable ladies at Calcutta. Why not send your missionaries to Paris, or Rome, or—charity begins at home—to London or Brighton, or still nearer home?'

I could not resist glancing towards the end of the room, where, through the open window, might be seen Lady Coddleton reclining on an ottoman, dividing her conversation between Mouton and an anti-fancy-fair lady, on a visit in the neighbourhood.

Justina answered my glance by saying: 'You are right; and it is curious enough that she has got just such a missionary as she wants, if she did but know it.'

'Mr Smalley?' said I, glancing towards that gentleman, who was still at the bazaar-table, piously flirting with the silken curls and white muslins.

Justina's brow darkened for a moment, but the shade gave place to one of those gleams of irresistible amusement, that brought her back to me completely as in days long past. Miss Rose, or, as her mother called her, Rosamond Coddleton, had joined the group at the table, and, at this moment, had selected a chimney-sweep doll, which she held up, and made gesticulate in ludicrous imitation of that reverend gentleman's action.

Justina held up her finger, and called Rosamond to her, who came looking very disconcerted, till she detected Miss Warner's involuntary smile.

'No,' Justina replied to me, 'not Mr Smalley, but —— Rose, my dear, where is Miss Marston to-night?'

'O dear, I wish you would ask her to come down, dear Miss Warner. She stays moping up stairs, and she won't come down, now there's company. I declare I'll go up stairs again, if she won't, and stay there.'

'Now,' continued Justina to us, 'this young woman, this Miss Marston, is just a specimen of'——

'Woman's mission,' ventured Mr de Lacy.

'No, no! I will not be laughed out of my notion this time. Besides, Miss Marston is perfection.'

'What a dreadful woman she must be!' said I. 'She would never do in India.'

'Now, I am quite determined to introduce her to you,' said Justina: 'you shall see I am in earnest.'

'Call Miss Marston a dreadful woman!' exclaimed Rosamond indignantly.

'Oh, but,' said I, 'I have such a horror of governesses. I always think of my sister in her back-board'——

Justina suddenly, for she was quick in all her movements, left the lawn, and entered the house with Rosamond.

De Lacy looked at me searchingly; then said with a strong effort: 'Forgive me, if I presume too much on our short acquaintance; but there is a question I must ask you: you are the friend of —— Tell me, is it true—that is, if it is not a matter of confidence—is it true that Miss Warner is engaged to your friend?'

'I will answer you candidly,' said I. 'A sort of engagement was made while my friend was in India: it rests with Justina Warner to cancel that engagement if—if she has repented it, as one of her hasty decisions. Will you be equally candid with me? You are interested in the question. Do you think, can you imagine, it is Miss Warner's wish to cancel that engagement?'

He blushed through his paleness like a school-girl.

'Forgive my plainness,' I continued, 'but I have strong reasons for urging a decided course. Will you tell me, then, plainly, if Miss Warner were free, would you propose to her yourself?'

He stepped back, quite in alarm. 'Myself! Oh, I should never venture. I never could bear her refusal, and the scorn with which she might overwhelm me—me, a poor younger brother, she would think, seeking to marry an heiress. I have sometimes ventured to wish she were poor.'

'But have you never tried to ascertain—have you no notion how she stands affected towards you?'

'No—o. O no—not the least.'

Yet I saw his pale face brighten up, and a sort of hopeful gleam flit across it, which told another tale.

'And suppose I should try to ascertain it for you?'

He looked at me with doubtful wonder, and then said calmly but resolutely: 'No; you have surprised from me a secret which I never meant to betray—you, a stranger. I do not deny it, I love Justina Warner more deeply than she is the least aware of. She treats me as a friend; she has never seen in me a pretender to her hand; if she did, I might forfeit that position which is now so dear to me. I love Justina Warner, but she shall never know it.'

'At least not through any other than yourself,' said I, turning round, for there stood Justina Warner just behind us.

De Lacy clasped his hands over his eyes, and looked as if he longed to make one bolt over the garden-wall. Justina looked disconcerted, but not displeased: no, I am certain she was not displeased; and though the flush of animation and joy brought back herself in her young days to my fancy, yet not even my vanity could take umbrage. She was turning to go, but I caught her hand.

'Let me take the privilege of an old friend,' I said—'a very old friend.'—There was the same quick look at my face.

'It is!—it must be. How could I be so blind? Gerald! what a silly trick you have played me; I never will forgive you!'

'Not quite so silly either,' I replied, still retaining her hand: 'I have made great discoveries by it. I have found out that I am fifteen years older; that such as I am now, you only consider yourself bound to me in honour, and frankly, and freely, and truly, I give you back your promise.'

'What! you will not have me?' said she, and looked out of her dark eyes with the merry, gipsy smile of the old days. She would have turned away, before I could answer, to join the rest of the party.

What had become of poor Howard de Lacy I know not, but I found myself alone with Justina Warner. She said in her old quick manner, and with a sort of *mutinerie* that rather alarmed me:

'And so you have come down in this melodramatic fashion to renounce me for ever?'

'Not quite,' replied I, laughing. 'I am quite ready to fulfil our engagement, if—if you do me the honour to insist on preferring a battered, scorched, gray-haired old Indian, to any one else in the world.'

She glanced at me askance, with eyes that looked very mischievous, in spite of the prim cap, to see if I was in earnest, then she turned her head away.

'Forgive me, dear Justina,' I continued, 'and hear my justification. Since that decision, by which we both agreed to abide, I have ascertained the existence of one—of the one—in short, the only woman—the —I mean Hester Dering.'

'Thank you!' said Justina, with the little reserved manner that belonged to the prim cap, 'for that balm to my vanity. I thought perhaps you had gone distraught by a vision of your first love, Rose May, who, I dare say, exists somewhere too.'

'Do you not know, then,' exclaimed I, 'who Rose May is? And she, too, passes me as a stranger—it is truly heart-rending.'

All this time I was thinking of Hester's exclamation—*she* had known me at once. Just at this moment, there loomed upon us, at the end of the garden-walk, capacious Lady Coddleton, who had condescended to place the tips of her fingers on the arm of Mr Smalley, who was carrying Mouton on the other.

'There!' said I—'can you conceive it possible *that* was once my May-Rose! O world! O life! O time!'

Justina was almost too astonished to reply at first; then she said:

'Is it possible, Gerald! And you, too, whom I did not know, and myself—should you not have known me?'

'O yes,' said I—'anywhere. Take off that odious cap, and you will look just like yourself. As you have been talking to me now, I quite wondered I had thought you altered at first. It is the mind that never alters, and now you are your own natural self. You have quite forgiven me, have you not, Justina? And if I may venture any advice—— But here comes poor De Lacy again. He will perhaps advise you better than I can.'

'He is so young!'

'And yet you, with that buoyant youthful character, which he so well understands, are younger still. I believe he sincerely loves you; but he is poor, noble-minded, and sensitive: he shrinks from the idea of seeking you for your fortune.'

I did not wait for her reply, but turned down another alley, and left the two together. I felt happy and relieved that I was free, and my task of tracing Hester Dering was now, I thought, easy; though, from the failure of all former efforts, I was at a loss how to commence my search. Pondering on this, I wandered on still in the garden alone, till a bell, ringing from the house, made me turn my steps mechanically that way. A voice near me roused me from my dreams; it was that of Rose Coddleton.

'There now, Miss Marston, there's the tea-bell; and do, pray, come into the drawing-room as soon as we have taken off our bonnets. I shall go in now, and get my hair done smooth. I wish ma would let me have it turned up. I am sure I am much too old for plaits, only ma likes me to look quite a child, I know.'

The young lady darted off, jumping over a flower-bed, and scrambling through the shrubs, leaving her governess to follow; and I could not avoid meeting her as she walked leisurely along the narrow path of the shrubbery. We were close to each other before I looked up to observe her, and there—was it truth? Was it a dream, or the image that had so strangely filled my mind? It was really and truly Hester Dering. She stood not one moment irresolute; her recognition of me was as instantaneous as my own of her; then, with a smothered cry, she fell into my arms, and I clasped her close to my heart, as if I feared to lose her again.

The tea-bell had rung in vain, and the closing evening alone reminded us to return to the house.

Hester had passed through a life of sorrow and suffering since we had parted. I must only here briefly say what had led her to her present position.

Her mother had died, and her father married again, foolishly, a young and frivolous wife. Her own marriage seemed the only chance of escape from a miserable home; but she refused all solicitations on this point, and by so doing, so entirely offended her father, that he made no opposition to her residing with the aunt (for her uncle was dead), with whom she had been before travelling that memorable summer. With her aunt she passed some tranquil years, till she was summoned to attend her father's deathbed. He died of apoplexy, and never spoke after she arrived. His affairs proved to be in the greatest disorder, and except the settlement made on his widow, all that remained for Hester was a mere pittance.

Most unhappily, too, the kind aunt, who had been more than a mother to Hester, suffered as well as herself from the ruin of Mr Dering, all her fortune, at her husband's death, having been placed in his hands for investment. Thus reduced in circumstances, Hester had again to decline the renewed addresses of a very disinterested admirer; but she would not leave her aunt, whose health was in a very declining state; and removing to London, that wilderness where they might be the most unknown, Hester added to their small means of subsistence by selling her paintings and teaching music.

At last, her aunt died; and till then she had never lost courage, nor felt entirely alone. She did not tell me—perhaps she has not told me yet—all she suffered at this time; sickness, poverty, and a despondency that made her unable to use the means that had before supported them both. They had changed their name with their fallen circumstances; and it was through the means of one of her musical pupils that Hester at last obtained a place as governess with Lady Coddleton.

'And so, you knew me directly, Hester,' said I, 'in spite of my brown face and gray hair; and neither of the others did. And you, I don't see that you are the least altered, though you have had a whole life of suffering to wear you down, while they have never had a care nor a trouble but of their own making. How is this?'

'Because, I suppose, we knew each other by the soul, which "the others," as you call them, never did. *That* never alters, dear Gerald, that never grows old.'

Hester and I were soon after married, and afterwards spent some time abroad. I had desired Williamson to write to me at Florence if any very desirable purchase of 'house and land' should come to his knowledge. He presently wrote accordingly, to tell me that Miss Warner's place, Whitethorns, was to be sold, and, in his opinion, would just suit me.

I hurried to Hester with the letter, in which there was not a word of Justina, nor any reason given for the sale of her property. I then looked vaguely through the English newspapers. They were full of tidings of fearful interest, for it was at the height of the Crimean war—that sudden reality of horror which brought such bitter experiences of sorrow, privation, disease, suffering, and 'sundry kinds of death,' into a class in England with whom all this had before been as mere words. I had but few friends for whom to feel a personal anxiety, and Hester took the paper from my hands to look for marriages. An exclamation of amused surprise escaped her.

'O Gerald! guess who is married?'

'Justina Warner, of course.'

'Oh, you forget that marriage was fixed for the week after we left England. Guess again.'

'No—tell me.'

'Well, then, Lady Coddleton to the Rev. Samuel Smalley.'

I ought not to have been surprised, but somehow the identity of Lady Coddleton with Rose May flashed suddenly across me, and I felt almost personally insulted that she had made so foolish a choice: I felt literally ashamed of her and of my successor. Hester was lenient in her judgment, but could not discuss the subject without laughing.

We had returned to London, and almost the first visit we received at our hotel in Albemarle Street was from Howard de Lacy. He was duly preceded by his card, or I should scarcely have recognised him, so worn he looked, so altered, and there was an ominous hectic in his hollow cheeks. I felt sure there was something wrong, something amiss; yet, with that strange reserve only comprehensible between two shy Englishmen, we neither of us pronounced the name of Justina.

Hester came suddenly in upon us, and at once exclaimed: 'But Justina, why is she not with you? Is she well? Tell me where I shall find her?'

It was some moments before he replied—the two red spots on his cheeks grew redder, and then quite pale. 'Miss Warner,' said he, 'is in the Crimea.'

'In the Crimea!' repeated I.

'Not married!' exclaimed my wife.

He wrung my hand, and was quite unable to speak. At last he said: 'Gerald, she is a noble creature! I am not worthy of her, and ought not to complain. As you have been abroad, and have not perhaps seen the newspapers, it must come on you strangely enough; and the name of Florence Nightingale would tell you nothing. *Her* story seems, indeed, to belong to the age of saints and martyrs, and to give a touch of beauty and dignity to ours, a glory of courage and devotedness. But of Justina—do not ask me to tell you the details of how it all came about. She is one of the hospital nurses at Scutari.'

'But, after all,' I said, 'your engagement continues? She will return; and then'——

He looked more disconsolate than ever. 'No,' said he; 'all is over between us. The letters she has written to me since her departure have dissolved our engagement.'

I was struck with his pertinacity in refusing every hope drawn from suggestions of caprice or instability in his admired Justina. He seemed determined to think her resolution irrevocable, and was so engrossed with the idea of her sacrifice of himself, that he scarcely wished to see her come down from the pedestal where he had placed her.

'Poor De Lacy,' said I, as he closed the door; 'he will not live long: he looks as if he were going into a decline.'

'I don't think so,' said Hester, and she looked as incredulously hard as Barbara Alleyne herself; 'at least, not for the love of Justina Warner.'

Two years after this, when Hester and I were quietly settled in our English home, Mr and Mrs Howard de Lacy came to pay us a visit of a 'parson's week.' Mrs Howard de Lacy was very fair, very girlish, with the clear transparent freshness and mild eyes of one of Francia's Madonnas. She was a distant cousin of her husband's, and they were so much alike that perhaps it was the only reason they had never before appreciated each other. Howard still coloured at the name of Justina Warner—a name never changed. She has kept a resolution at last!

She returned from her pilgrimage among the last of the brave lady-nurses, 'a sadder and a wiser' woman, but a much happier one. This time, it had not been the mere spurt of enthusiasm—a simply benevolent amusement; it had been reality; charity, baptised in the fiery chalice of self-sacrifice.

Justina Warner has found at length her vocation, and a worthy aim for her active energies. Her charities are not confined to one department—she helps the poor, teaches the young, and cures the sick. Truth, however, compels me to state that hers is not such a complete reformation from all eccentricity and whim as I should feel proud to present my readers as a moral at the conclusion of this story. There are no such sudden transformations in real life. Yet few acquainted with Justina Warner as she is, would wish her different from herself. You would never even wish her younger—the handsome, cheery, matronly spinster! No husband invented on purpose could possibly have made her happier than she is. She has succeeded to a noble fortune, on the death of the general, and she has learned the lesson how to use it nobly, for she has studied the wants of others.

We are all getting far into the 'middle ages' now, and often talk of these bygone days over Christmas fires and on summer holidays. We also talk of future ones; and there is a marriage on the tapis between my second daughter, Justina's godchild, and Howard de Lacy's eldest son. I did not half like it at first, but it was Miss Warner who insisted on gaining my consent.

THE COMPLETE COURT LETTER-WRITER.

If there be any humble individual, such as the poet describes, conscious of possessing a turn for politics, but debarred by the lowness of his lot from meddling with affairs of state, we should recommend him for his comfort to borrow, if possible, to hire, if necessary, but by no means to expend his scanty capital in purchasing the *Memoirs of the Court of George IV.*, by his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.[*] The title-page of these two bulky volumes looks so magnificent, while their contents are so unspeakably meagre and trivial, that we are at once involuntarily reminded of the cry of the fruit-sellers of Constantinople, who perambulate the streets of that capital with, 'In the Name of the Prophet—Figs!' The ducal editor has been arraigned by many, and pretty roughly handled for having made market of private confidences, and violated the sanctities of friendship, in publishing all this family correspondence; but for our own part, we acquit him very readily of all such crime. We are indeed almost led to believe that the accusations themselves must have been made by his literary friends, to give a piquancy to a somewhat insipid performance, and to swell, by the 'puff oblique,' the sails of a couple of far from clipper schooners. If the relatives of the ancient correspondents of the House of Buckingham have any real cause for anger, it seems to us to lie in this—that their ancestors are now held up to the British public in the disagreeable light of the worst and most twaddling letter-writers of their time. The literary effusions of some of the rulers of England's destinies, thirty years ago, do, in truth, shew most ignobly like the tittle-tattle of elderly females in a provincial town; the only difference being that the scandal, which forms the staple of both commodities, is in the one case the scandal of Bullock Smithy, and in the other, that of 'the Cottage' at Windsor. The sole peculiarity of the court-letters is their affected secrecy (whether original or editorial we do not know), which reminds us of nothing so much as the mysterious behaviour of Messrs Pike and Pluck towards Mrs Wititterly, who overcome that weak-minded lady with references to the D. of C., and the C. of B. It is Sir William Freemantle who writes as follows to the Marquis of Buckingham, from Englefield Green—but we could better imagine it to have been Lady Freemantle to the marchioness:

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[*] Hurst and Blackett. 1859.

'The K—— has been in this neighbourhood for the last fortnight, living in the greatest retirement; his party consisting of very few—the principal object of course the Lady C——, who is here. They ride every day, or go on the water, or drive in a barouche; the K—— and her always together, separated from the rest, and in the evening sitting alone apart. I have heard of the Esterhazys—who called on a friend here, and said the evenings were *triste à mourir*—no cards, no books, no amusement, or employment of any kind; Sir Benjamin and Lady Bloomfield, Lord C——, Nagle, Thornton, Keppel, and one or two more; I believe the Warwicks for two days; the Duke of Dorset. The secrecy that is preserved as to their pursuits is beyond all idea; no servant is permitted to say who is there; no one of the party calls on anybody, or goes near Windsor; and when they ride, a groom is in advance, ordering everybody to retire, for "the K—— is coming." The private rides are of course avoided by the neighbours; so that, in fact, you know almost as much of what is going on as I do, excepting that the excess of his attentions and *enjouement* is beyond belief.'

It is not too much to say that the person about whom the statesmen of England (including even the D. of W.) seem to have mainly concerned themselves in those days was Lady Conyngham; if the government had been an absolute monarchy, and she the queen, she could scarcely have occupied a more prominent space in these volumes; the terror of her being so great as even to dwarf the grave apprehensions entertained of the schemes of Lord John Russell for the total subversion of the constitution, and establishment of a republic upon its ruins. After the death of Queen Caroline, it appears that Lady C—— was even looked upon as the arbitress of the K——'s matrimonial future; since Goody Freemantle is found writing, as follows, to his gossip of Buckingham:

'The story abroad is, that they are trying to cook up a match for the king with a princess of Tour and Taxis—I believe a sister of the Duchess of Cumberland—and a sister of the Princess Esterhazy. Metternich is at the bottom of it. Query, whether Lady C—— will oppose or promote a match? If her lord would go, other objects might occur to her; indeed, it is hinted that she is trying to push her daughter for the prize. The Duchess of C—— had a long letter from the king a few days ago, full of the highest spirits. *I think I have told you all I have picked up.*'

Even when the K—— is ill, it is satisfactory to find that he can at least eat and drink very tolerably; and Goody Freemantle, whom we guess to have had but a weak stomach of his own, has this to tell us: 'Previous to dinner, I thought his majesty looked dreadfully dejected and thoughtful; but when he had dined—professing to have no appetite—and ate as much as would have served me for three days, of fish—but no meat—together with a bottle of strong punch, he was in much better spirits, and vastly agreeable.' The K—— was certainly a gross feeder, as well as 'one who loved the mud, rising to no fancy flies,' in other respects: we doubt whether many of his subjects could have acquitted themselves upon a sea-voyage as he did; upon the occasion, for instance, when he went over to visit his faithful people in Ireland, of which Goody Freemantle thus writes: 'I don't know whether you have heard any of the details from Ireland, but the conduct of the Irish is beyond all conception of loyalty and adulation, and, I fear, will serve to strengthen those feelings of self-will and personal authority which are at all times uppermost in The Mind. The passage to Dublin was occupied in eating goose-pie and drinking whisky, in which his majesty partook most abundantly, singing many joyous songs, and being in a state, on his arrival, to double in sight even the numbers of his gracious subjects assembled on the pier to receive him. The fact was that they were in the last stage of intoxication. However, they got him to the Park. Lady C—— has been almost constantly at the Phœnix Park, but has not appeared much in public.'

Notwithstanding, however, the carnal accompaniments of goose-pie and whisky, we have the gratification of learning that the K—— had been taught an excellent lesson by a storm which occurred during his passage, although the particular channel of his religious feelings may appear somewhat singular.

'Lady Harcourt told me (Freemantle) his *pious acknowledgment* for his great escape of being shipwrecked was quite edifying, and the very great change in his moral habits and religious feelings was quite astonishing, and all owing to Lady C——.' But, indeed, it was not only courtiers who took these peculiar views of the K——'s favourite and Regnante of the Brighton Pavilion, insomuch as we are assured that the Scottish preacher, Irving, was wont to indicate her presence among his fashionable audience by a very delicate piece of flattery. 'Lauderdale told me,' says the Lord Chancellor, 'that when Lady —— is there, the preacher never speaks of a heavenly mansion, but a heavenly *Pavilion*. For other ears, mansion is sufficient.'

The true value of this Buckingham Correspondence—for Memoirs of the Court they are not—consists in their exhibition of the character of George IV. He seems to have really had some good and affectionate impulses; and had he not been so unfortunate as to be a king, he would evidently have been a better man. In spite, however, of the title of First Gentleman in Europe, which some of his courtiers gave to him, he had scarcely any of the elements of a gentleman, even to begin with. Coarse-minded and licentious to a degree which we could not make intelligible to now-a-day readers, he had nothing to mitigate his animalism but an outside lackering of Manners, and even this was laid on so very thinly, that the real substance of The Mind was continually shewing itself through it. 'His royal progresses,' says one of the most intimate of his courtiers, 'were like the canvassings of a popular candidate for senatorial honours;' while his fits of dignity, following, as they sometimes did, upon such familiarities as permitting his royal back to be slapped, were by contrast ludicrous in the extreme. The worst feature of his character was his overwhelming egotism and selfishness. His courtiers were always at their wits' end to pamper him and keep him in good-humour. 'I have been *manufacturing* an address from this neighbourhood,' writes one of them, to please the K—— with expressions of sympathy with him against the Q——. The good gentleman succeeded only too well, for his majesty was so delighted, that he insisted upon seeing some of the subscribers at his own table; at which gracious mandate the courtier was sorely distressed, since all those whose signatures he had so loyally obtained were 'perfectly unfit' to be invited.

Like some other indifferent kings of whom we have read, poor George was very sorry for himself when ill, and very frightened at the thought of his brother-majesty, the King of Terrors. His physician became naturally enough one of his chiefest friends, nor did he ever feel quite easy during his absence.

'My dear Friend—For God's sake, come down to me to-morrow morning. The melancholy tidings of the almost sudden death of my poor little niece[*] have just reached me, and have overset me beyond all I can express to you. Poor William's letter, which is all affection, and especially towards you, refers me to you for all the particulars; therefore, pray come to me with as little delay as possible. I have not time to add a word more about myself. You will be a great consolation to me. Ever your most affectionate friend, G. R.'

The following letter to Lord Eldon manifests the Father of his People at least as much concerned for the gratification of his private pique as for the good of his country, and is not the only instance in which the K—— is displayed in a somewhat malicious and revengeful light:

'Brighton, *January* 9, 1821.

'My dear Lord—As the court of law will now open within a few days, I am desirous to know the decision that has been taken by the attorney-general upon the mode in which all the vendors of treason, and libellers, such as Benbow, &c., are to be prosecuted. This is a measure so vitally indispensable to my feelings, as well as to the country, that I must *insist* that no *further* loss of time should be suffered to elapse before proceedings be instituted. It is *clear* beyond dispute from the improvement of the public mind, and the loyalty which the country is now everywhere displaying, *if properly cultivated and turned to the best advantage by ministers*, that the government will thereby be enabled to *repair* to the *country* and to *me*, those evils of the magnitude of which there can be but one opinion. This I write to you in your double capacity as a friend and a Minister; and I wish, under the *same* feelings to Lord Sidmouth, that you would communicate my opinions and determination to him. Always, my dear Lord, very sincerely yours, G. R.'

Of the ostentatious manners, so foreign to our own times, of the days when George IV. was king, there are one or two remarkable examples; but even at that date they seem to have provoked ridicule or apprehension. Mr Charles Wynn gives the following account of the ordinary retinue of Lord Wellesley, then the King's Lieutenant in Ireland—'as he took care more than once in conversation to style himself'—who was visiting at Dropmore with Mr Wynn:

'In and about his carriage were five servants, among whom were two young *gentlemen*, between eighteen and nineteen, who, by the housemaid's report, made his bed. (I should have thought one would have been sufficient to make or unmake it.) Lady Grenville was cruel enough not to repeat this to me till he was gone, so that I had no sight of them.'

That Mr Hume and the economists were a terror to evil-doers in high places at the period of which we write, we can easily imagine, when we come upon such outrageous disbursements as these: 'Hume has given notice of a motion for a committee to examine into the Coronation expenses, which is most embarrassing. It must, I suppose, be resisted; but true it is that the crown, made up of hired jewels, was kept till within the last three weeks, so that there will be twenty-two months' hire to be paid, which might have been saved, amounting to L.11,000. The charge of L.24,000 for robes is also terrible.'

These robes may now be seen by any Londoner for the small charge of one shilling at Madame Tussaud's in Baker Street, where also his majesty George IV. is exhibited of the full size of life, apparelled in the said gorgeous vestments, and so fulfilling one of his chiefest missions while in the flesh.

A SETTLER'S HOLIDAY.

I had tried many phases of life, but none answered; perhaps the secret of my ill success was discovered by one of my neighbours, who remarked that I was 'Jack-of-all-trades, and master of none.' However it might be, I grew poorer and poorer, until nothing seemed left to me but emigration. The Cape at that time offered great advantages to settlers, so thither I went. Government bestowed on me what was styled a beautiful farm, but I found it a lovely wilderness, on which the hand of civilised man had left no trace. Here, then, was abundant scope for my peculiar talents, and by their diligent exercise, aided by the services of a few Hottentots, I soon succeeded in erecting a house, and bringing under cultivation fields and gardens. Sheep and oxen I was compelled to purchase, but I obtained sufficient of them to dot my hillsides with their snowy fleeces and dappled hides; and at the end of two years I sat down, well pleased to rest from my multifarious labours, beneath the shade of the vines and fig-trees, which were already beginning to spread abroad their arms.

During all this time, I had never enjoyed a whole holiday, and my half ones had been few and far between; and when one day two of the neighbouring settlers asked me to join a hunting-party in the wilds of the neutral territory, I accepted their invitation with the delight of a boy. As my farm was nearest to the frontier, my companions joined me there the night before; and as soon as it was light, we started off for the place of meeting, some thirty miles distant.

Away we cantered through green bowery lanes, perfumed with the starry blossoms of the jasmine, and aglow with the clusters of the scarlet geranium and the flowering laurel. On we dashed through little brawling rivers, and walked our horses up deep rocky gorges, where hundreds of monkeys leaped from ledge to ledge, mowing and chattering at us as we passed, and uttering shrill cries of anger as they sent down upon us whole showers of stones and branches, until at length we reached the wide rolling prairie. Then on we sped again, with the fresh morning breeze blowing through our hair, and exhilarating our spirits; with the cloudless sky glowing above our heads, and the flowery wilds spreading far around us, dotted with herds of bounding antelopes, and here and there with the dark forms of solitary buffalo or gnu, or brace of terror-stricken ostriches.

We had achieved about two-thirds of our journey, when we entered on a district checkered with clumps of trees, beneath whose shade the grass waved long and luxuriantly, and was thickly studded with flowers. Among them was one new to me, a sort of chandelier lily, of immense size and snowy whiteness, and I immediately resolved to obtain the bulb. Promising, therefore, to overtake my companions, I hastily dismounted, and throwing the bridle over my horse's head, to insure his standing, and laying my rifle on the ground, I began to dig for my prize. While I was thus busily scraping away the earth, my eye was attracted by some slight agitation of the grass near me, which did not seem exactly the effects of wind: even as I looked, a strange wavy motion became distinctly visible; the next moment, with a sudden spring, an enormous snake rose up before me, glaring at me with fiery eyes and hooded crest, its open jaws emitting that low, yet terrific *hiss*, which, once heard, is never forgotten, and which appeared to agitate every one of the sparkling coils into which he had drawn his immense length.

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[*] The infant daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Clarence.

I was still on my knees, and for moments or minutes, I know not which—for they appeared to me hours—the snake and I remained motionless, gazing on each other; my very heart seemed to stand still, as my eye rested in horrible fascination on his hideous beauty. My blood curdled, and a deadly coldness shot through every limb, as if I were paralysed, and about to yield myself resistless to my fate. Suddenly, a full sense of my danger burst upon me, and uttering a wild cry, which seemed to appal even my fearful foe, I sprang to my feet, and rushed madly over the plain.

That cry of terror soon brought back my companions, but ere they reached me, there was a second shriek, of fear and agony combined; it was from my poor horse, whom, on approaching nearer, we found struggling on the ground, with the huge shiny coils of the same snake wreathed round his neck and fore-legs. The next moment, three bullets were lodged in the body of the cobra da capello, quickly followed by three more, and with all haste, my poor steed was relieved from the remains of his terrible enemy.

But there was a deep bite in the unfortunate animal's lip; and even while we were bringing him water from a neighbouring pond, and endeavouring to aid and soothe him, the venom began to spread through his system, and he rolled and writhed in death-throes that were fearful to witness. I stood by in sorrowful silence, watching life thus ebbing painfully away from my patient and faithful servant, who had so often borne me through darkness, storm, heat, and weariness, and now dying the death I had myself so narrowly escaped. I shuddered as I watched its horrors, and they added deep fervour to the gratitude with which I thanked Providence for preserving me from such a doom.

At length it was over; my good horse had uttered his last moan, and his sufferings were at an end, but I felt his death a mournful episode, that dashed the pleasure of my holiday, and had it been in my power, I would at once have returned home. But my friends would not hear of it, and remembering that there were now but two horses between three, and that I could not very well appropriate one to my own use, I agreed to proceed, being sure at the place of meeting of finding a remount.

Before we again started, my companions resolved to measure the snake, and accordingly began stretching him out to his full length. While they were thus employed, a low hollow groan became faintly audible. The recent occurrence had so shaken our nerves, that we started back in alarm, as if we thought another snake had found another victim; but there was nothing to be seen. The next moment, a second groan floated by us, this time evidently issued from a thicket of brushwood close at hand.

Supposing some wounded animal had there sought shelter, we instituted a wary search, lest our acquaintance should begin with his teeth or claws. Round and round we probed the leaves with our rifles, but without success, until one of my companions kneeling down, and looking among the roots, uttered a cry of triumph, as, lifting the branches, he brought to light the large, muscular form of a Caffre. Nearly insensible, if not dying, the poor wretch appeared to be, with the blood flowing from an assegai-blow in his side, and a broad bruise in his head, apparently inflicted by a knobkerrie. We at once set to work to bind up his wounds, and to attempt his resuscitation, and as soon as the sufferer was sufficiently revived, began to question him, in a mixture of Dutch and Caffre, as to the cause of his present plight.

The wounded man's dark countenance grew grim and stern as he related how, proceeding with a marauding-party into the colony, he had angered his chief, who with his own hand had thus wounded him; and that he had crept into the thicket, where we found him, to die. A glance of deadly hatred shot from his eyes as he added: 'If the chiefs make good haste, they may yet catch Ketanoo before he reaches the Valley of Blue Lilies.'

The Valley of Blue Lilies! An exclamation of horror rose to our lips, and a pang of agony shot to my heart, for it was that lovely and beautiful valley where I had built my home, and where, but a few hours since, I had left my wife and little ones in fancied security. It was distraction to think that danger, perhaps death, was around those dear ones, and that I was far away, unable to defend them from the assaults of their fierce and pitiless foe, or, if I could do no more, to die with them. Without a second's delay, I caught the bridle of the nearest horse, and sprang into his saddle; but ere I could start, my friends were round me. There was a momentary consultation, when it was resolved that Thornton should hasten on the only remaining horse to demand assistance at the nearest military post, and Staines hurry on foot to bring the hunters to our aid, while I should ride with all speed to Blue Lilies, to share the fate of its dear inhabitants.

Swift as the wind, I swept over the level prairie; but ere I had gone many miles, the sun began to dip and lose itself behind the western hills, and night fell, leaving me with the worst part of my journey unperformed. Still on I went, stumbling over monster ant-hills and into miry ponds, as I dashed on in the dim starlight; then I tore down a steep defile, bristling with the spear-like leaves of the clustering aloes, and saddened by the spectral euphorbias which waved their mournful branches above my head—on through rough, devious paths trodden by wild animals in the jungle, until I at length arrived on the banks of the Kroomkie River. At the same moment, the crescent moon came rising above the trees, casting a silvery light over hill and tree, and gently flowing river, and enabling me to seek for the ford by which I should have to cross. The Kroomkie was a small stream, flowing like a gleaming thread between high banks, whose steep sides were clothed with thorn-trees and lofty canes, compelling me to ride along the bank until I should reach a path leading down to the ford.

As I rode on, even amid my anxiety, it struck me that some unusual sound disturbed the profound stillness of the wilderness. The brilliant stars and the young moon were gleaming in the cloudless sky, and not a breath of wind stirred the leaves; the birds had gone to rest, and the wild beasts had not yet left their lairs; still there was a sound, momentarily becoming more distinct, as of a struggle or contest. Could it be the Caffre onslaught? But I remembered that Blue Lilies was still many miles distant; and that, whatever its fate, no token of it could reach me there. The next instant, a bend in the stream brought the whole moonlit river full before me; and there was also the ford but a little in advance of me, into which two horsemen were entering from the opposite side, their dark forms contrasting with the silvery water, which scarce reached to their horses' knees. They were merry, too, and their echoing laughter came like mockery to the fears which were wringing my heart, but I hastened forward to meet them, and entreat their assistance.

Meanwhile, that strange sound grew rapidly on my ears, until it became a crashing of trees, and a roar as of a distant ocean. Then the gay laughter changed to a wild cry, as just above the strangers, the whole bed of the river became filled by an enormous wave, like a crested wall of water, rolling along with terrific violence. There was no space for attempt at escape or rescue, for the next moment the death-wave swept over its victims, burying them in its turbid depths.

I stood by silent and appalled, while the torrent rolled by me, roaring, foaming, and bearing all before it in its headlong journey towards the sea. I had often heard of the freshets, which, occasioned by heavy rains among the mountain sources, or sometimes the bursting of a natural reservoir, come down the rivers in gigantic waves, leaving death and desolation in their track; but this was my first sight of one, and truly a fearful scene it was: the late gentle river filled to the brim with a boiling, surging flood, dark, turgid, and muttering, laden with uptorn trees, and tangled branches, and with dead and struggling animals, all tossing wildly hither and thither, now thrown on the surface, now drawn into the eddying depths, as they were swept swiftly by.

The next moment brought with it the remembrance that the freshet rolled between me and Blue Lilies, interposing a barrier stronger than iron, and more insurmountable than mountains. Should I venture, it would not be to aid those I loved, but to destroy my last chance of ever again seeing them; it would be idly casting away a life which might yet do them service, and that thought held me reluctantly back from the brink of the river. My only hope was, and oh! how earnestly I prayed it, that Thornton, who had the same river to cross, only nearer the sea, might have passed ere the wave came down, and so be able to bring aid to the dear ones, from whom I was so utterly divided.

During all the remaining hours of that night, I paced the small open space beside the ford, well-nigh frantic with my detention, now vainly watching the brink for some sign of the river's decrease, now looking up into the sky, fearing each moment to see the reflection of my blazing roof-tree, while I thought with agony of the unsuspecting feeble ones exposed to the ruthlessness of savages. Then, as the night wore on, the voices of the wild animals rang wailingly through the bush—the hysteric laugh of the hyena, the moaning bark of the jackal, and the roar of the leopard, mingled now and then with the despairing cry of some wild animal swept down by the freshet—all tending to deepen my misery, and aiding me in conjuring up harrowing thoughts.

Day at length dawned on the still brimming flood, and on me still watching beside it, while with every hour of forced inactivity my heart grew sadder and more despairing. Towards sunset, the force of the current began to abate, and the eddies to gurgle and mutter less angrily, so I resolved at once to attempt the passage. Owing to the long delay by the riverside, my horse was fresh, and full of vigour and courage; and when I rode him to a favourable spot, a little above the ford, he bounded in readily at a touch of the whip and spur, regardless that I was on his back, and that I held a rifle uplifted in my right hand.

The next moment, the torrent was sweeping us down with all its force, and beating angrily against us, while my gallant steed, undismayed by the turmoil, struck boldly and bravely out for the opposite bank; but where we gained a foot across, we lost a fathom in leeway, so powerfully did the current bear us with it, all the while surging and gurgling loudly, and muttering in my ears hoarse threats that I should never more tread dry land, but turning and twisting round among the eddies, be swept down, another trophy of the freshet's might.

I think they must have dinned a like threat in the ears of my good horse, for in the centre of the river he uttered a cry of fear, and throwing his head up higher, beat the water wildly with his fore-feet. Bending forward, but still holding my rifle and powder out of reach of the water, I tried with hand and voice to reassure him; but it was with little success; and more than once had the surges foamed over both horse and rider ere my horse recovered his courage and nerve again. Then the struggle was resumed, and arduous it proved; and while the result was yet doubtful, night closed in on the dark waters, adding to our difficulties and danger. Still the good steed toiled on bravely in the darkness, until at length his feet touched ground; the next minute, he scrambled up the bank, wearied and exhausted, but victorious.

One roll on the grass, one minute to recover breath, and my horse was again ready for the road; and on we dashed through the darkness towards Blue Lilies. Every step I drew nearer home, deeper and deeper grew my anxiety and my fears; and when at length I could discern the faint outline of the embosoming hills, my heart seemed to stand still with terror of what the next few minutes might disclose. As I approached nearer the valley, all wore its usual aspect of tranquil repose; and for the first time since I had heard the evil tidings, a glimmering of hope crossed my mind. But when I reached the spot, I found it was the stillness of desolation; my house was a heap of smouldering ruins, my sheep-folds were torn down, my cattle-kraals empty, and it seemed no living creature remained within the valley to tell the tale of rapine, which none had arrived in time to prevent.

Had this calamity fallen upon me without a moment's preparation, I do not think it could have struck deeper than it did now. Slowly and feebly, like an aged man, I dismounted from my horse, and shrunk down beside the still smoking grave of all I loved, while the torrent of grief, and horror, and yearning for vengeance, that rolled over my soul, was deeper and more tumultuous than the waters of the Kroomkie, through which I had so lately struggled.

After a time, a faint sound attracted my attention, and I looked up to see a light flash out from a ruined shepherd's hut, far up the valley. Imagining some lingering Caffres to be there feasting on the spoil, I seized my rifle, and hastened up. But what could equal my surprise, my almost frantic joy, when, sitting around the fire in life and safety, I beheld those I so deeply mourned! A Hottentot herdsman had seen the approaching foe from the summit of one of the hills, and rushed in with the tidings in time for his mistress and her children to find safety in flight into the bush; and when the same Hottentot had ascertained the Caffres' departure, they had returned again to Blue Lilies.

Erelong, there was a trampling of horses in the valley, a lowing of cattle, and the loud voices of men. It heralded the arrival of Thornton and the military party he went to seek. On their way to Blue Lilies, they had crossed the 'spoor' of the abstracted cattle, and dashed on after them; and the freshet having prevented the Caffres crossing the river, they had taken them in the very act, and brought them and their booty back in triumph.

That night, mirth and laughter echoed through the valley, from the camp-fire round which sat the successful military party and Thornton; and the voice of the roofless and well-nigh ruined settler was not silent. I had begun the world too often to be appalled that I had it to do once more; and all my regrets were lost in joy that my wife and children were spared to me. The next day, with unflagging industry, I began the work of restoration; and in a few months, not a trace remained, save in my own memory, of the disastrous events of my holiday.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THREE months of real earnest work make the Easter holiday come very acceptable to our scientific and learned societies; and now, having had a breathing-time, they are all busy with work that must be finished before the long vacation. The president of the Royal Society, Sir Benjamin Brodie, has given one of his two soirées to the Fellows and to savans generally; and great was the gathering. Advantage was taken of the opportunity to exhibit some of the newest facts of science—as, for example, Mr Gassiot's important and suggestive experiments with electrical discharges in a vacuum; Mr Wheatstone's improvements in telegraphy, which render it possible to print 500 letters a minute by telegraph—not quite 50,000, as some periodicals have erroneously announced. He calls it the *Automatic writing telegraph*, far easier to manipulate than the instruments now in use—so easy, that even an illiterate person could send a message. Surely eight letters a second will be rapid enough for all purposes. In a paper read before the Society of Arts, Mr Varley shews how the difficulties of submarine telegraphy may be overcome. Another noticeable fact was Mr Warren De la Rue's latest photographs of the moon, which are wonderfully distinct, and completely set at rest the question of rotundity. Looked at in the stereoscope, our satellite presents to us a solid globular face, with all its inequalities strongly marked; and if the gentleman who has lately tried to make the Astronomical Society believe that the moon is only a shadow thrown by the earth—if he will just take the trouble to look at these photographs, he will perhaps become aware of his error. Mr De la Rue has for some time been trying to get a silvered glass mirror for his telescope: should he succeed, we may look for lunar photographs far superior to the present—indeed, truly magnificent, for silvered glass reflects more light than the best speculum metal hitherto produced. Let any one invent a process whereby a perfect parabolic glass mirror can be produced, and we promise him fame and fortune.

In a conversation which arose at one of the evening-meetings of the Royal Society, Dr Tyndall mentioned certain observations which he had made during his ascent of Monte Rosa—namely, that a hole pierced with a stick or axe-handle in newly fallen snow appears of a blue colour. The endeavour to explain the phenomenon involves interesting questions in optical science; but the true explanation appears to be, that light is entangled among the flakes, and is reflected backwards and forwards by the minute crystals with endless repetitions, and thereby manifests itself to the eye of a blue colour. In the discussion which followed, mention was made of the blue colour of the Lake of Geneva, and of the Rhone in its passage by the city, which was attributed by Davy to the presence of iodine; but it is now shewn that the colour is simply due to the minute particles of mica which are poured in at the head of the lake, with all the mud borne from the glaciers; and these, held in suspension, reflect the blue of the atmosphere, and make the water appear of that colour.

Two or three papers on Glycol deserve passing notice on account of their importance to chemical science, in the view which they open into a wide field of discovery. On a future occasion, we shall be able to communicate particulars.—The demand for glycerine increases so largely, that soap-makers who, from time immemorial, have wasted glycerine with their refuse liquor, have been invited—as they say in Paris—to take measures for the separation beforehand of this valuable product.—Dr Frankland, who well sustains his reputation, is pursuing his researches on compounds of ethyl, and has described the results in an experimental paper, also before the Royal Society: we commend one of his facts to the attention of homœopathists; it is, that the odour of the compound called distanethyl will produce all the symptoms of influenza, lasting for two or three hours, on the person who smells it.

Mr Mallet has read a paper, with a hard scientific title, to the Institution of Civil Engineers, which may be explained simply as an inquiry into the means of knowing when large masses of wrought iron are as strong as they ought to be. The larger the mass, the more liable is it to the occurrence of flaws on cooling; and it appears that overmuch forging is a cause of weakness.—Mr Roper believes that his process for the desulphurisation of coke will benefit all who work in iron, seeing that the purer the coke, the better and stronger will be the iron smelted therewith. The process consists in the using of an oven with a double bottom, through which, when the coke is in complete ignition, a flood of steam is forced, which rising through the smoke, carries off the sulphur. Should this be found applicable on a large scale, millions of tons of coal now useless and absolutely injurious in the manufacture of iron, will become available.—Mr Fleming, a civil engineer, has exhibited and described to the Canadian Institute, what he calls a new compound rail for railways, in which he inserts a core to maintain the continuity, and thereby practically does away with the joints; and as the two sides of the rail are made precisely alike, when the top is worn, it is turned upside down, and so will last for sixteen years.

Cambridge is taking steps to apply the munificent fund bequeathed by the late Rev. R. Sheepshanks—namely, L.10,000, of which one-sixth is to be set aside to maintain an astronomical scholarship in Trinity College, while, with the remainder, the study of astronomy and of the sciences required in an astronomical observatory, is to be encouraged.—Professor Piazzi Smyth once more reminds the scientific world that the question of establishing a mountain observatory on Teneriffe ought not to be lost sight of.—For the convenience of shipmasters, the turret-clocks through all the long line of docks at Liverpool are to be united by telegraph, so that a captain watching for the stroke of one o'clock in any dock, will be able to compare his chronometer with the exact time flashed from the observatory.—Besides his astronomical reports, M. Le Verrier, of the observatory at Paris, is publishing daily bulletins of the weather from all parts of Europe; he gets the needful information by telegraph, and prints it, to circulate among meteorological observers; and one of the results appears to be, that those who study the laws of storms, can tell beforehand what changes are likely to occur in the wind and weather.

The question of spontaneous generation has been warmly discussed once more by the zoologists and physiologists of the Academy at Paris. Living creatures, microzoa, have been found generated on a tuft of hay placed with due precaution in other than atmospheric air, and after exposure to the temperature of boiling water. But the most eminent of the academicians doubt the theory and the fact: Professor Milne-Edwards, whose name ranks among the highest, sees no motive for believing in spontaneous generation, while there is every reason to believe that the smallest as well as the largest creatures are subject to the same law; their existence only possible by procreation from other living beings. He considers that in time, chemistry will be able to form all the parts that make up an animal body, but not to cause a genesis of animated organisms without the concourse of vital power. Yet, results have been obtained which can scarcely be explained otherwise than by the theory of spontaneous generation.

At their anniversary meeting, the Geological Society gave their Wollaston medal to Mr Charles Darwin, in recognition of the eminent services he has rendered, both practical and philosophical, to geological science; and to Mr Peach, the well-known naturalist, formerly of Cornwall, now of Wick, they granted their Wollaston fund; he being, as Sir Roderick Murchison says, 'an ingenuous, modest, energetic man, and a zealous, active, and sound geologist.' The Society have caused experiments to be made on the coal sent from Tete by Dr Livingstone, and find it to contain but little of sulphur, iron, or gaseous matter, but plenty of ash. It is thought that a better quality will be found below the surface. Among other mineral matters brought before the Society, we notice a tin ore from Greenland, and various specimens of copper, zinc ore, and malachite, collected in the hills near Tabreez, forwarded by the Hon. C. A. Murray.—By the way, geology is not going to sleep, for a rival to the Society has appeared in the Geologists' Association, which already numbers some three hundred members.

Dr Sicard of Marseille has formed an interesting collection of the products derived from the sorgho, the Chinese sugar-cane, which has been much talked of lately. The number 423 is already surprisingly large, and comprises portions of the plant itself, with the spikes and seeds; various kinds of flour made by grinding the seeds, and mixing the meal with other kinds of flour; specimens of sorgho bread; of sugars of different qualities; of the juice; of beer, cider, vinegar, and brandy, all made from sorgho juice; sorghotic acid; various dyes, carmine, red, rose, yellow, lilac, slate colour, and gray; besides other preparations. The doctor has, moreover, written and published two volumes concerning the sorgho, containing a description of the plant, and of the processes by which it is to be utilised.

The Agricultural Society have just published a prize essay on the potato-disease, from which we quote a passage for the notice of those whom it may concern. The author, Dr Lang, says 'the disease is of a fungoid nature, increased in virulency by atmospheric causes. That all manures are injurious, saving only lime and salt. That the earliest potatoes in ripening should be exclusively grown. That earthing up repeatedly with fine earth is the only effectual preventive to the ravages of the disease.'

We take the opportunity to mention here, that a correspondent, jealous for the honour of his country, reminds us that the operation of 'ringing' the branches of vines, as mentioned in last *Month*, has long been practised in England. An account of the operation appears in the first volume of the Transactions of the Horticultural Society, published in 1808. And that a fine specimen of the *Poinciana Gilliesii* is growing in the Botanic Garden at Kew.

The Geographical Society, always fertile in attractive subjects at their fortnightly meetings, have had a paper on the Yang-tsze-kiang, as illustrated by Lord Elgin's expedition up that mighty and long mysterious river; and while this describes the stream, Sir John Davis, in another paper, gives a description of the valley through which it flows.—The Royal Engineers having just despatched a party for the survey of British Columbia, are required to organise a second party for service on the continent of Europe—that is, to survey and mark the boundary-line between Turkey and Montenegro, and between Turkey and Persia: a task that will occupy probably three years.—A small sovereignty is going a-begging: the king of Fiji offers to place his dominions under the protection of England, for the sum of L.9000.—Signor Miani, a Venetian, who has resided ten years in Cairo, is preparing an expedition to rediscover the source of the Nile, under the auspices of the French government, who contribute arms, ammunition, and professional assistants. The party hope to explore the river thoroughly, to penetrate to the south till they cross the equator, then turn to the east, and come down upon the coast at Zanzibar. It is said that among their equipments they will carry frightful masks, with which to terrify the natives; if this be true, it does not say much for the common sense of the leaders of the expedition.—Many readers will remember Captain Basil Hall's interesting account of landing through the surf at Madras; that adventurous process is now to be abolished, greatly to the comfort of passengers, by the construction of a pier with screw-piles. Will not the catamaran-men get up a cry about vested interests? —Steamers are built and building in the ship-yards of the Thames and the Tyne for the navigation of the rivers of India; and we hear that a clever engineer in Bengal places a railway locomotive on board a boat, and makes it drive the paddle-wheels.—The Society of Arts have discussed another long and important paper on the Growth of Cotton in India, a subject which cannot be too much ventilated, bearing as it does on the prosperity of our eastern empire.

Interesting alike to artists and savans are the questions now mooted as to site, space, and organisation. The British Museum is overfull; the cellars are crowded with things that cannot be shewn for want of room; and it is recommended, not without reason, that the best way of affording relief would be to remove the natural history collections to the Museum at Kensington.—The National Gallery is in the same predicament, so the Royal Academy are to migrate from Trafalgar Square, to a new house which, being wealthy, they offer to build at their own cost, if government will give them a site on the grounds of Burlington House.—The Institute of British Architects have held a practical discussion on Metropolitan Improvements, with a view to discover the best.—Mr Ruskin, in a lecture delivered at Bradford, gave the manufacturers of that busy town a word of advice, which the whole West Riding may profit by. He urged them not to study mere fashion and caprice, but that which is true and elevating; to leave off stealing designs from one another, and seek rather to invent for themselves.

We are promised a series of Nature-printed botanical works by Mr Henry Bradbury. A collection of figures, of octavo size, including every species of British Ferns, is being prepared, and will be issued periodically, with descriptive text by Mr Thomas Moore. Uniform with the above will be published Nature-printed British Sea-weeds and Nature-printed British Mosses. The specimens already issued are exceedingly lifelike and beautiful.

Mr Wiard of Prairie du Chien is employed in constructing an ice-boat, which he is confident will prove successful. The general plan of the boat is set forth by the inventor as follows: 'The boat which I first propose to build will be twelve feet in width by seventy in length, and when resting upon the water, would displace about one foot in depth. It will be propelled by a pair of locomotive engines, acting on a single driving-wheel, to which adhesion is given by various devices. The bottom, ends, and sides of the hull, for about three feet in height, are of iron; the upper part is enclosed and finished similar to a passenger-car, and warmed by steam-pipes, and will accommodate one hundred passengers; it is steered by a pilot familiar with the river, by devices which give him perfect command over it. A steam-brake is attached, by which its velocity may be perfectly controlled; the boat is supported on skates or runners, so adjustable as to pass through snow five feet in depth without presenting any considerable resistance.' The Canadian and American press are enthusiastic about the probable results of this invention. Their many thousand miles of rivers will become, they calculate, even more practicable and useful in winter than in summer; while they consider the speedy establishment of a swift overland mail from Montreal to Puget's Sound inevitable, since the Mississippi, the Red River of the North, Saskatchewan, and Fraser River—the last two being separated near their sources by a distance of only 317 yards—may easily be made to form a net-work of ice-navigation, broken only by three or four brief portages from the railways of Wisconsin on the east, to the deep waters of Puget's Sound and the Pacific. If the boat breaks through the ice, or encounters an air-hole, machinery is prepared for that emergency. The driving-wheel is near the stern. The inventor calculates the ordinary speed on the ice at twenty to forty miles an hour; while with clear solid ice, he believes the vessel may be made to attain a velocity of eighty miles.

RACHEL'S DREAM.

WHY didst thou wake me, Deborah? for I have dreamed a dream
So bright, methinks, that it will make my day the darker seem;
E'en like the rosy, blushing cloud that smiles at early morn,
Smiles to betray the shepherd's trust, and laugh his hopes to scorn.
Wouldst hear the dream, the fleeting dream, that passed away too soon?
Thou knowest where I lead my flocks to take their rest at noon:
Beneath the chestnut's shade I sat, and felt the south-wind blow
From whence the frankincense and myrrh in dropping odours flow;
But sweet as camphire, calamus, spikenard, and saffron are,
I had a blossom pleasanter, a treasure sweeter far.
Yea, Deborah, kind sleep had brought what waking days deny—
A mother's joy, a mother's bliss, a mother's ecstasy.
I nursed a baby on my breast; its hand moved to and fro,
With that sweet, soft, caressing touch which only mothers know.
As, with light stroke of downy wing, some little fluttering bird
Scarce parts the gentle air, and yet the southern wind is stirred,
So seems to me that little hand had stirred within my soul
A depth of longing mother's love that leaps without control.
No bee from red pomegranate's cup such melting honey sips,
As I, when bending down, I kissed those coral-parted lips,
And looked within the soul-lit eyes that mirrored back my own,
And felt soft breath upon my cheek—then woke—my dove had flown.
Nay, chide not, Deborah, my nurse; I cannot help but weep;
Oh, I would give a waking year for one such night of sleep.
Nay, ask me not to lead the sheep; I care not now to guide
The tender kids, that they may feed the shepherds' tents beside.
The lowing of the gentle herds, the bleating of the flock,
Seem but a cruel voice, that doth the childless Rachel mock.
I envy every ewe her lambs, and then I weep for shame.
Call me not Rachel, Deborah; call me some other name.
My husband loves me with a love so faithful, dost thou say,
That fourteen years wherein he served seemed unto him a day:
The drought consumed him in the noon, and chilling frost at night,
But still he journeyed on content with me, his goal, in sight.
'Twas even so; and I have nought to give him in return;
No token of the love that doth within my bosom burn.
He never once reproached me—nay, his very silence makes
My grief more bitter, and my soul with deeper sorrow aches.
For, if I had a little son, I know his life would be
Bound with the lad's, as it hath been bound up, kind heart, with me.
Oh, tell me not, the infant's birth might be the mother's death;
Methinks, for such a happiness I'd gladly yield my breath:
For then it would not seem to me that I had loved in vain,
A fruitless dry and withered branch upon the desert plain.
If I were gone, I know they would return to Canaan's land,
Where Jacob with his Rachel's child in Isaac's tent would stand,
And bid the blind man bless the boy, and with his fingers trace
The features of Rebekah in the little Syrian face.
The son of his old age should prove the apple of his eye.
And Jacob he would love the lad—ah, well and tenderly.
And he would guide his tender feet in pastures fresh and fair,
And lead him by refreshing streams, with all a shepherd's care.
For Jacob's God shall be with him, and bear him safe from ills,
And give him blessings that shall reach the everlasting hills.
Then, when my husband's hour arrives, ere, like a shock of corn,
He comes in season to his rest, with songs of triumph borne,
His Rachel's treasured memory shall to his vision rise,
And he shall her see stand again 'neath Padanaram skies.
Again, in youthful beauty, he shall meet her at [illegible] well,
And he shall name the name in death he loved in [illegible] so well;
And Rachel's son shall kneel beside, and take [illegible] parting breath,
And Rachel's son shall close his eyes when Jacob sleeps in death.
O blessings of Rebekah! on the wretched Rachel [illegible]
O spring from me, Thou *one* in whom all nations shall be blest!
I cannot pray—I cry that great, exceeding, bitter [illegible]
In anguish of my spirit—'Give me children, else [illegible]

A Correspondent calls our attention to an injustice [illegible] ently committed by the contributor of the article Co-op[illegible] (*Chambers's Journal*, No. 272), in not having mentioned [illegible] the name of Mr G. J. Holyoake as the author of the wo[illegible] which his information was supplied.

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A FIT OF THE GOLD-FEVER.

We invite the reader to trace the proceedings of a community suddenly infected with a gold-fever—rushing wildly to a region where golden wealth was supposed to be abundant; indulging in the most sanguine anticipations of the greatness of the profits obtainable, and of their speedy realisation; drooping into despondency when the reality was found wanting; and returning to the place whence they came, foot-sore, hungry, and penniless.

In a part of New South Wales little less than 900 miles north of Sydney, and 1500 from Melbourne, the Fitzroy River empties itself into the ocean at Keppel Bay, not far from the southern tropic, and just at the limit where the colony borders on the almost unknown wastes of torrid Australia. About thirty miles up this river, on the north or left bank, is a small station called Rockhampton, which, in the summer of 1858, consisted simply of one drinking-booth, one store, and four log-huts. Thirty or forty miles inland from this station, away from the river's bank, is a certain small patch of land called in the native language Canoona. At a distance from Fitzroy River, about 150 miles nearer to Sydney, is the settlement of Port Curtis, with the very young town of Gladstone as its metropolis. Now the region thus marked out became, in the autumn of last year, the scene of an excitement of a very extraordinary kind. It is necessary, to understand the transactions, that we bear in mind the relative positions of the places named; for the colonists employ rather indiscriminately the five names Canoona, Rockhampton, Fitzroy River, Port Curtis, and Gladstone, in speaking of the gold-fields. In the year 1852, the Rev. W. B. Clarke, who had paid great attention to the geology of gold-fields, expressed a decided opinion, from the observance of striking analogies with other quarters, that the mountains in this part of Australia are rich in auriferous deposits; and as he had been singularly successful in his predictions on this subject elsewhere, the thoughts of some of the colonists became directed to the region in question. Explorers from time to time paid a passing visit to a range of mountains some distance in the interior, in a position of which the central point may be laid down in about 25° south latitude, 147° east longitude; and, from the nature of the rocks and the number of the streams, it was by many deemed probable that Mr Clarke's suppositions would prove to be well founded. Little more was done, however, than the establishment of a few traders at Port Curtis, and a few sheep-stations and cattle 'runs' in the open country between that place and the Fitzroy River.

Such was the tranquil state of affairs when, in the month of August 1858, the good people of Sydney were suddenly attacked with a gold-fever. A letter appeared in one of the Sydney newspapers, from a correspondent at Moreton Bay, stating that, on the northern boundary of New South Wales, near Fitzroy River, an important discovery of gold had been made. A small trading-vessel, the *Jenny Lind*, brought more than one letter of similar tenor. Later in the month, the *Coquette* anchored in Sydney, bringing more news from the north, and a few specimens of the gold obtained. One Captain Parkins announced the fact that he had seen as much as four pounds-weight of gold from the same locality. A mercantile firm, about the same time, received a letter from Port Curtis, in which their correspondent said: 'There is no mistake. You may give credit to what I state, that this must be the best diggings in the colony.' Many letters of similar character reached Sydney; it was soon found that most of the inhabitants of Gladstone had gone to Rockhampton, on their way to the Canoona field; and a Mr Samuel Gearside wrote to state that he had 'met a man' at Gladstone who declared that he had found twenty-two ounces of gold in one week.

It fell to the lot of a government officer, unintentionally, to feed the excitement which had arisen from the above reports and letters. On the 7th of September, Captain O'Connell, government resident at Gladstone, wrote to the minister for Lands and Public Works at Sydney, to the effect that the gold at Fitzroy River was sufficiently important to warrant the registry of that district among the recognised gold-fields of the colony, protected and controlled in the same way as the other diggings by the 'Gold Fields Management Act' of New South Wales. There were at that date three hundred persons at Canoona. Unfortunately, Captain O'Connell gave the weight of his authority to a statement that 'instances of great individual success in obtaining gold are reported; two persons having last week, in two days, washed out seventeen ounces of the precious metal.'

All these letters and reports, coming from so many sources, greatly agitated the more restless and adventurous portion of the Sydney population. The steadier citizens looked on doubtingly. The newspapers stimulated the excitement; though one, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, judiciously sought to allay it, foreseeing the possibility of disastrous results. On one particular day, a rumour circulated in the city, to the effect that a letter had been received from Port Curtis, stating that a man in a party of three had made L.7000 as his share in one gold-field. 'We determined, if possible,' said the editor of the paper just named, 'to trace this report to its source. A gentleman in office, Mr A., had heard it mentioned by Mr B. of the Exchange, who, it was said, had seen the letter. A second gentleman had it on what he considered most reliable authority—namely, five mercantile men and one "high official." As the official resided out of town, we deferred further inquiries until Tuesday morning. Yesterday, we sent to Mr B., who said he heard it from Mr C., a custom-house agent. To Mr C. accordingly we went, who referred us to Captain D. This gentleman was not at home; but a relative of his informed us that she had heard her brother mention that such a letter had been received, although she herself had not seen it. Pursuing our inquiries, we at length heard that the letter was in the possession of the toll-keeper at the Parramatta toll-bar. A special messenger was at once despatched thither. Stone, the toll-keeper, said he had heard of the letter, but had not seen it; he had, however, received *a* letter from Port Curtis on Saturday night last, and was kept up until two o'clock on Sunday morning by persons wishing to see it.' This particular letter had been sufficiently favourable to induce the toll-keeper's two sons to plan an expedition to Fitzroy River; but the 'L.7000' eluded all search. So it was in almost every case, whenever a magnificent golden rumour was traced to its source—it proved to be a new edition of the old story of the *Three Black Crows*.

True or untrue, the rumours once set afloat, merchants and traders were not wanting to take advantage of the excitement. The shipowners came first, seeing that the only suitable mode of reaching Fitzroy River was by sea. Each day there were increased applicants at the shipping-offices; and these applications stimulated the shipowners to bring forward all the vessels they could spare. During the first half of September, there sailed 9 vessels from Sydney, with passengers for Gladstone, carrying about 60 passengers each on an average; but the second half of the month exhibited the fever raging at a much greater height. The *Malay* took out 112 passengers, the *William Bell*, 160; the *Yarra Yarra*, 223; the *Isca*, 272; the *Wonga Wonga*, 290; the *City of Sydney*, 325; the *Grand Trianon*, 497—in short, September witnessed the voyages of 27 vessels from Sydney, carrying in the aggregate not less than 3180 persons to the diggings. Newcastle and Moreton Bay also sent their quota of adventurers. Melbourne, five or six hundred miles further distant, could only receive the golden news second-hand from Sydney; but when it *did* arrive, the excitement was boundless. A Melbourne newspaper said: 'Immediately the reports arrived, excitement began to manifest itself. Hundreds of people made up their minds that fortunes were to be had for the going; and, without considering the thousand and one chances against them, they took their passages in whatever vessels were bound for Port Curtis.' Gold-diggers are among the most reckless of beings; if they hear of gold-fields more rich than their own, they will tramp off to them amid numberless miseries—indifferent to all, if the gold should turn out to be 'nuggety.' The merchants of Melbourne, too, were smitten with the fever in their own way; they knew that diggers would want food and clothing, buildings, and utensils. Hence the dispatch of numerous vessels from Melbourne to Fitzroy River, with nearly 3000 passengers, and large cargoes of merchandise. Screw-steamers, ships, barks, brigs, brigantines, schooners—all were brought into requisition for this voyage of 1500 miles. The shipowners of Sydney had the word 'Fitzroy' at all times ready for use in their advertisements and announcements. The owner of the *Maid of the Yarra*, in announcing the approaching sale by auction of that crack screw-steamer, 'whose sailing qualities are not surpassed by,' &c., took care to insinuate that she was 'well adapted for trading on the Fitzroy River.' The vessels announced to sail from Sydney, 'calling at Rockhampton to land passengers for the Canoona diggings,' occupied whole columns of the newspapers. Some of the shipowners appealed to the more cautious and respectable speculators, who looked forward to possible future contingencies, by offering return-tickets at ten guineas each, 'available for six weeks.'

Nor were the shop and store keepers of Sydney a whit behind the shipowners in this race for rapid profits. The rumours were to them like money, and were used accordingly. Bullion-dealers exhibited real or feigned bits of Fitzroy River gold, with scraps of testimonials relating thereto. The newspapers began to be crowded with advertisements of a special character. One trader, taking a stern view of the dangers of gold-digging, advertised 'Colt's revolvers at L.5 each, for diggers.' Another invited attention to his stock of deals, cement, posts, rails, palings, laths, shingles, slates, doors, sashes, and every requisite for the speedy building of dwellings and store-rooms at the gold-field. One speculative individual drew the notice of 'Fitzroy diggers' to 'an excellent saddle and bridle; also a good watch-dog.' Tent-makers were invited, by one advertiser, to purchase a patent sewing-machine, cheap; while gold-buyers were informed, by another, that their wants in gold-weighing scales could be supplied. Some advertisers headed their announcements with 'Fitzroy Diggings, Fitzroy Diggings—Tents! Tents! Tents!' Not only did a certain individual offer 'the celebrated Paragon Tent' for 20s.; he also made up a 40s. diggers' outfit, comprising tent, blanket, mattress, pillow, trousers, jumper, belt, and hat. The jewellers announced that their shops were 'Fitzroy gold-offices.' The ironmongers, of course, were not slow in bringing into notice their picks, shovels, axes, camp-kettles, boilers, prospecting-pans, galvanised buckets, Californian cradles, and other implements of the gold-digger's craft; the leather-sellers had diggers' belts, 'fancy patterns, cheap and good;' and a bootmaker, using the imperative mood, cried, 'Diggers, buy your peg-boots at ——'s peg-boot warehouse.' The ubiquitous Professor Holloway assured the world in general, and the Fitzroy River adventurers in particular, that among the numerous wonderful powers of his pills, the most striking was that of curing all the maladies to which diggers are exposed.

All these things together drove the gold-fever up to a great height. Every one at Sydney talked about the precious metal. Workmen left their benches, labourers their fields, shopmen their counters, clerks their desks, fathers their families, in an eager desire to share the wondrous harvest of gold which was believed to be in store for them. The daily scene at the shipping-quay was one of highly wrought excitement. Here and there were tears and sorrow at separation; but for the most part the adventurers were joyous. Passengers, perched on various parts of the vessels and rigging, cheered with loud huzzas those whom they were about to leave behind, and were as loudly cheered in return. Diggers, gamblers, traders, carriers, workmen, tapsters, storekeepers, agents, bullion-dealers, bankers—all went off to Fitzroy River, to the number of several thousands. The rush was startling, considering that the whole affair had been so recent. It was only on the 7th of September that the Sydney newspapers contained the first announcements and rumours concerning the Canoona diggings; and yet, by the 2d of October, no less than 45 vessels had left Sydney for the Fitzroy, with 3200 passengers; and there was room for 1500 more in ships then at the quay—these numbers being irrespective of those from Melbourne, Newcastle, Brisbane, and other places.

Let it be remembered, in relation to this matter, that five or six thousand persons started on the enterprise so nearly at one time, that few or none of them had opportunity to see how the others fared. All rushed off, alike in precipitancy, alike in ignorance, alike in eager thirst for gold. Each adventurer did what he did because others were doing the same —not because he could offer a sound reason for his proceeding. As a body, they were prepared for nothing but success; they had neither the inclination nor the means for combating against unfavourable circumstances, either at the diggings or on the way thither.

The parliament and executive of New South Wales were not blind to the possibilities of failure at the new diggings; although it was beyond their power to shield the speculators from the natural consequences of their own rashness. One of the first measures adopted was to declare Canoona a gold-field, subject to the regulations governing such places; another was to appoint a staff of police for the protection of Canoona, Rockhampton, and Gladstone; a third was to send out iron and wooden buildings to Canoona, for a custom-house, two hospitals, a dispensary, &c. In relation to these measures, and the expenditure arising out of them, a member of the Legislative Assembly elicited from the government a statement that, though L.10,000 had thus been appropriated, the adventurers must rely on their own resources, and must get back as they best could, if the diggings should not prove remunerative.

As Captain O'Connell's letter of the 7th of September had, unintentionally on his part, tended to feed the gold-fever, so did a further letter of the 20th convey a notion that the prospects were steadily improving. One fact perplexed him much; nearly all the males had run off from Gladstone to the diggings, and he had only four constables 'to protect a town scattered over about two miles and a half of ground, with the families of the absent diggers to be protected' from aboriginal outrage, which he deemed not unlikely on the confines of colonial civilisation. On the 4th of October, the Sydney speculators and adventurers were alarmed by the tone of a dispatch written by Captain O'Connell at Rockhampton, on the 27th of September. He had ascertained that the first 300 diggers had really obtained moderate success at the Canoona field; but that the 1000 who very speedily followed them, finding that particular spot sufficiently occupied, had suddenly suffered a revulsion in their gold-fever. They were disappointed, alarmed, angry. The captain knew, too, that by that time thousands more were coming. With the sudden influx of population from the south, an alarming rise took place in the price of provisions. The chief cause of this rise was, not the distance from Sydney by ship, but the land-journey of thirty-five miles, between Rockhampton and Canoona, through a region having no roads and very few vehicles.

No sooner did Sydney learn that something was wrong at the diggings, than certain of the shopkeepers sought to make money out of the misfortunes, in a way that the world is always ready to laugh at. A 'Fitzroy River thermometer'—from *gone crazy* to *freezing-point*—was sketched by a draughtsman, engraved, and published, pictorially representing the various stages of the gold-fever. Another citizen, a basket-maker, addressed, in an advertisement, an ode to 'disappointed diggers,' in which he broadly hints that their failure 'serves them right;' and that they would do well to return to honest labour, and to dealings with such persons as himself.

Disappointment soon assumed the form of panic. The actual gold-field itself, at Canoona, was only a few acres in extent; it was soon covered, and soon exhausted, by the first immigrants; and as the rest had neither means nor inclination for a steady course of exploration further inland, want stared them in the face. Although the Sydney merchants shipped off provisions, clothing, building materials, vehicles, and draught-animals to the Fitzroy River; yet, as the money held by all the five or six thousand adventurers was small in aggregate amount, the purchasing power would soon be exhausted, unless nuggets or gold-dust came to their aid. As early as the 30th of September, those adventurers who were trudging along from Rockhampton to Canoona, met others returning in the opposite direction, impoverished, dispirited, and heartsick. The weather was dry, the water was scanty, and this limited the power of the men to go 'prospecting' at other spots. On that day, water was selling at sixpence a gallon at Canoona. The diggers, or would-be diggers, arriving at a particular spot, and finding no gold, immediately sought for some one on whom to cast the blame; a particular individual, living in that neighbourhood, had been one of the first to make the announcement of gold at Canoona; and —rushing to an illogical conclusion with the same heedlessness as they had rushed to the diggings— they accused him of being the cause of their miseries; he was placed in imminent peril of being 'lynched,' unless he succeeded in finding new and rich gold-fields. The reckless might do such things; but the weak and foolish were greater in number, and were likely to suffer more. One of the journals sent its 'Own Correspondent' to see the whole affair for himself. Rockhampton was a scene of violent excitement. Many hundreds of the adventurers, dismayed by the cries that met them, never went to Canoona at all; they landed, took fright, and sought eagerly for a return-passage to Sydney. Hastily built stores at Rockhampton were in imminent danger of pillage by the more ruffianly of the disappointed adventurers. Ship-loads of passengers arrived; and the new-comers were franticly urged by those on shore to seize the ships, and compel the captains to carry back to Sydney those who were disappointed. Many of the passengers, startled at this state of affairs, did not land at all; they quietly returned to the port whence they came, wiser but poorer than before. Merchants and agents, going out with ventures of merchandise, were perplexed how to act; if, on the one hand, they might have made enormous profits through the urgent wants of those who still had money by them; so, on the other hand, the merchandise might be seized as spoil by the more daring and lawless adventurers, at a period when all police arrangements were yet in their infancy. Many of these merchants and agents resolved, under the circumstances, not to break bulk at all; they either held back for a time, or returned to Sydney. The sufferings of many on shore were very great; for Rockhampton and Canoona could not accommodate all, even if money had been at hand; while those whose money-store had been nearly or quite exhausted by the expenses of the outfit and the voyage, were reduced to immediate and absolute want. The captains of all the ships were received with fierce abuse, on the ground that the shipowners had, by their highly coloured advertisements, contributed to the misery. Some of the captains, out of policy, some out of kindness, consented to carry back passengers at very reduced fares. There was a panic for an immediate return; the timid dreaded to look forward; they exclaimed: 'When the ship-loads of Melbourne diggers arrive, what will become of us all!' Some of the Melbourne ships were intercepted on the way to Canoona; and the captains prudently resolved to stay their further progress—the passengers consenting thereto. The gold-fever was now truly in its second paroxysm; it was a madness to get *from* Rockhampton following a madness to get *to* that place, all within a period of a few weeks. And yet observant men believe that this gold-field will really be an important one; but it must be worked by practised and steady diggers, backed up by men of capital who can supply all the requisites, and who can afford to wait for the day of profitable return. The fever attacked the thousands of thoughtless and ignorant; and Sydney, during the winter, had much difficulty, even with the most generous contributions from the inhabitants, in providing for the homeless wanderers after their return. Many of them were conveyed gratuitously to profitable gold-fields in other parts of the colony.

MEMOIRS OF HELEN OF MECKLENBURG-SCHWERIN, DUCHESS OF ORLEANS.

It is to be feared—more than feared—that no faithful administrator of a constitutional monarchy is likely to descend from a Bourbon. This, however, in no way affects the interest we have felt in the memoirs we are about to introduce to our readers' notice. It is an interest which all may share, be their politics what they may; an interest which it is well that all should share, for sympathy with sorrow nobly borne, and tender admiration for feminine worth, are never felt wholly in vain.

The little French book now before us, published a few weeks ago, has already passed through four editions, though one year has not yet elapsed since the unexpected death of the sweet woman whose life it sketches for us. No wonder, then, that in its tone we trace something of the idealising tenderness of recent bereavement.

Helen-Louisa-Elizabeth of Mecklenburg-Schwerin had, we find, hereditary claims to strength and charm of character; her mother—Caroline of Weimar—was the daughter of the grand duke who classed Goethe and Schiller amongst his friends, and of that Princess Louisa, whose gentle intelligence conciliated Napoleon himself, and won from the haughty conqueror some concessions in favour of her suffering country. The Princess Helen, born in 1814, lost her mother when she was a little unconscious child of two; but that mother's place was filled, according to her dying request, by a cousin of her own, who devoted herself to the care and education of the orphans, and won their hearts by a quite maternal tenderness. From earliest years, the young Helen appears to have had the genius to be loved. Delicate in health as she was susceptible in feeling, her instructors were obliged rather to keep her back than to urge her on in her studies; for the recital of a heroic deed, or a touching incident, would completely overcome her. At the age of twelve, she lost a young companion in lessons and play, and fell sick of very sorrow, retaining ever after an expression of sadness on her sweet young face—a prophecy of darker trials yet to come. Up to the age of thirteen, the princess had been brought up in strict seclusion, and with most simple tastes. Living generally in the country, nature made of her 'a lady of her own,' and to the last, 'skiey influences,' fine scenery, and the sight of flowers, were to her sources of lively enjoyment. At the age of sixteen, she was confirmed according to the rites of the Lutheran Church, in the presence of many humble friends, who loved and prayed for '*unsere gute Helene*,' as they called her. We may perhaps wonder that brought up thus in simple and primitive relations with the people, and accustomed to see them perfectly satisfied with a paternal government, she should have been able, at her early age, to hear without horror, nay, with interest and sympathy, of the rising of the French nation against their sovereign; but certain it is that from the first her heart espoused the popular cause, and that the name of Orleans, as identified with it, had for her a special interest. From this time forward, French literature, the French language, everything relating to France, occupied a large share of her attention.

Soon after the revolution of 1830, the delicate health of the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg led to her being sent to Töplitz. The Princess Helen spent most of her time in her step-mother's sick-room; but all who saw her were deeply impressed with her sweetness and intelligence—the king of Prussia particularly so, as we shall see presently. At Töplitz, the Duchess of Angoulême made the acquaintance of the young girl, destined, like herself, to exile; and these two noble natures responded to each other at once. In 1834, a second great sorrow fell upon the young princess; her brother Albert met with a grievous accident, and after some months of suffering, died. His sister nursed him through days and nights of anguish, herself unsustained by any hope of his recovery, and brought all her own fortitude and resignation to help him patiently to bear pain and part with life's promise at the age of twenty-two.

The winter following her brother's death was spent by her in the solitude of the country, with no other relaxation than such as she found in her visits to the cottages of the poor. Her sorrow's solace was to help the suffering.

But the time drew near when the quiet tenor of her daily life was to change. In the spring of 1836, the Dukes of Orleans and Nemours paid a visit to the court of Berlin, where they were affectionately received by the king, whose only regret was that he had no daughter of his own to trust to their care. But he recollected the young Helen with whom he had been so charmed six years before at Töplitz, and painted her in such attractive colours that the young duke resolved to see and judge for himself, and then proceeded to sound the feelings of the Mecklenburg court upon the subject. The grand duke dreaded to trust his young sister to so uncertain a fate; but the very trials of the position, the very insecurity of the throne of France, appeared but additional incentives to the high spirit of the princess herself, who cared less for happiness than for the full development of all mental and moral faculties in the carrying out of 'a great, a glorious, and an important life-task.' The marriage-contract was signed on the 5th of April 1837; and early in May, the young betrothed left Germany, accompanied by her mother. Her entry into France was bright and triumphal, and her native grace and dignity at once charmed the impressionable people, whose future queen she seemed destined to be. How dim and dream-like that Fontainebleau meeting now seems, thrown into remote distance by fresh revolutions and another dynasty on the throne! Yet we can still discern that it was a touching scene: Louis-Philippe standing at the foot of the great staircase, surrounded by his stalwart sons; the good queen with her daughters grouped around her; the young princess, with her royal yet childlike look, bending gracefully to kiss the king's hand, then throwing herself lovingly into the arms of her new mother. Here is a letter of hers, written on the first anniversary of her marriage, to her most intimate friend: 'To-day my heart is more than ever happy and thankful. It is one of those days which one greets on each return with fresh emotion. How different to the past year! Now all my former hopes are realised, and new ones bind me to life. A true and deep affection, which that day I did not even presage, is now rooted in my heart; my position with respect to my family is established on a firm basis, and founded, as regards the nation, on a hope near at hand: here are causes for thankfulness which exceed what your dear heart and that of my mother could have hoped or I imagined.' And again, writing to the same friend, a few hours after the birth of the Count of Paris, we have a strain of still fuller joy: 'How gracious God is! Your heart has lifted itself up in thanksgiving as well as mine—it has felt the greatness of my happiness. Yes, your child is the happiest of mothers, and her heart feels too weak to contain the whole of its bliss. A new world spreads out before me; a child to cherish, the hopes of a nation to be realised through that child's future. A great, a glorious task; may God give wisdom and guidance!'

The birth of a second son, in 1840, filled this full cup fuller still; but it was held in a steady hand. Earnestly religious and thoughtful from her childhood upwards, her biographer says of her at this time, that 'not one simple pleasure found her indifferent, not one failed to awake in her a train of heavenward thought.' Happy for her indeed was it, for trouble was at hand. The poor heart was to have for its trial 'all the sun and all the shower.' Delicate health set in, and the doctors insisted that she should leave Neuilly for Plombières. Always careless of her own health, she reluctantly obeyed. She regretted to leave her children in the summer season, when she could most share the outdoor pleasures of their little lives. On the 3d of July 1842, she left Neuilly, accompanied by her husband. This, their last journey together, was a bright and cheerful one. The delicate health was hardly felt to be an evil. 'I am so happy,' characteristically observed the duchess one day, 'that I have not the least wish to get well. If I had not this trial, I should probably have some more painful one. Of all evils, physical suffering is the least, and I only go to Plombières because my family wish it.' They reached Plombières on the 6th of July. That evening her husband walked with her through one of the pretty neighbouring valleys, and as she often stopped to gather the wild-flowers, he too would gather and add to her store. He brought her a handful of the wild scabious. The omen was not noticed then. Looking back, a loving superstition remembered that the scabious is called the widow's flower.

On the 7th of July, the duke departed very early in the morning. O these unconscious *last* partings! How is it that the poor heart has no foreboding—that we smile back at lips that will never smile on us again, look calmly into eyes that will greet ours no more, that these great agonies cast no shadow before them! 'We shall not be long parted,' said the poor princess; 'but the first moment is always painful.'

On the 13th, the duke set out to Neuilly, to bid adieu to his father before his own departure for St Omer. Passing the gate of Maillot, the horses took fright and ran away; the postilion could not stop, though he could still guide them. The duke jumped out—fell with such violence as to cause concussion of the brain, and, after a few hours of insensibility, breathed his last in the small house to which he had been carried. His whole family—all but his poor wife—were around him as he died; the queen, in that hour of fiery trial, ejaculating, with a sublime resignation stronger even than a mother's grief: '*O mon Dieu, c'est beaucoup souffrir, mais ce n'est pas trop souffrir!*' We return to Plombières. 'On the 14th, the weather being fine, the Duchess of Orleans rejoiced to feel herself stronger, and proposed an excursion to the valley of Gérarmé, the home, for several generations, of a family of musical peasants, who still shew with pride a pianoforte made by their grandfather. The princess asked to see it, and rested for some time in the cabin, where a young shepherd executed, on a wretched guitar, all sorts of airs, which she tried after him, to the great delight of all his family. It was late when the party returned to Plombières, and the princess had to receive some guests at dinner. Enlivened by her excursion, her hands full of flowers, she hurried up to her own room, and began her toilet. Madame de Montesquiou, too, was just beginning to dress, when a servant came to tell her that General Baudrand begged her to go down to him. Surprised at such a request, it had to be twice repeated. 'Madame, he begs you will go down at once.'

'But, good heavens, Monnier, you look scared!'

'Madame, I entreat you, go down at once.'

'My God, what has happened? Is the king assassinated?'

'Madame, you may fear the worst; but do not remain so near the princess—go down noiselessly.'

She went down, and found the general with his letter in hand, unable to speak or to rise from his seat. He held out to her the fatal letter, which contained only these words—'The prince-royal is dead.' Had he been assassinated—had he fallen in quelling an insurrection—had some sudden illness carried him off? These few words only announced the irreparable calamity—how announce it thus to the princess without any preparation or explanation soever? There was no time to be lost; the valet-de-chambre, watch in hand, was heard saying: 'There is but a quarter of an hour to dinner. No one here has heard the tidings; it is still possible to conceal them from the princess.' But this idea was rejected. The prefect and the physician were summoned. The latter insisted upon nothing being mentioned in the first instance, but a serious illness. 'Her life is at stake,' said he —'you are responsible for it.' Finally, it was resolved that the prefect should go and prepare a dispatch, professing to be a telegraphic message just arrived, announcing that the prince had been taken seriously ill at Paris. There was no further time for deliberation; a few minutes more, and the princess would have left her room.

Madame de Montesquiou, imploring Heaven to give her strength beyond her own, went up the staircase that led to the apartment of the princess, and was only divided from it by a landing and a glass door. At that door she stopped for a moment, and through its muslin curtains she could see the princess give the finishing-touch to her graceful evening-dress, then turn towards her with a bright joyous air, and open the door. Leaning motionless against the wall, Madame de Montesquiou had not courage to utter the words that were to destroy so much happiness.

'What! not dressed yet?' said the princess merrily. 'But what is the matter?' added she, looking again. 'You are very pale: what has happened? A family misfortune? Your children, your husband ill?' Madame de Montesquiou pressed her hands without answering. This prolonged silence did not seem to warn her.

'No, madame,' said Madame de Montesquiou at last; 'no misfortune has befallen me; but I am not the less most unhappy. I have to announce a fact to your Royal Highness'—— She started back at these words.

'Great God! what has happened? My children—the king?'

'Alas! madame, the prince-royal is seriously ill.'

'O my God! he is dead—I am sure of it: tell me.' And she fell, shrieking, on her knees. 'My God have pity on me: do not suffer him to die; thou knowest that I shall not survive him.'

She remained a few minutes in prayer, then asked to see the dispatch, and read it over several times. 'This is not the usual form of telegraphic messages,' said she, a doubt crossing her mind, which the prefect soon dispelled. Then she burst into tears; but soon after, rising firmly, she said: 'I must set out at once; perhaps I may still arrive in time to nurse him.' Orders for departure were at once given. For some moments she would cling to hope. 'Perhaps I shall find him almost well again. Oh, then, I shall be well scolded, but how happy should I be to be scolded!' Then fear would prevail. 'He is so afraid of making me uneasy, he must be very ill, since he has had me told of it.'

This intolerable fluctuation of fear and hope—sick hope, that but deepens fear, as lightning-flashes do the darkness that swallows them up—lasted for several hours of the miserable journey. At eight o'clock the duchess left Plombières. At one o'clock a carriage was met coming from Paris. M. Chomel, physician to the royal family, was the first to tell her that all was indeed over—that an accident had deprived her of her husband; that the few words which from time to time he had spoken during those unconscious hours in the roadside cottage, had been in *her* mother-tongue.

The duchess lay back in the carriage, sobbing in the darkness, believing—such assuagement is granted to these dread first hours—that she could not survive her loss. They spoke to her of her children. 'My poor children!' she exclaimed. 'It is only for him that I now feel: it is he who had all my heart!'

It was not till the 16th of July that she reached Neuilly. Alas! despite all her haste, she was too late for the last look she had so craved. The coffin, already closed, lay in the middle of the sombre chapel. She knelt by it, rose from her knees strengthened, and went at once to put on that widow's garb she never laid aside.

'The death of the Duke of Orleans,' Alison observes, 'was an event of such importance that it was equivalent to a revolution.' His opinions, if never very definitely stated, were generally understood to be decidedly liberal, and his popularity was as great as it was well deserved. His death 'shook the very foundations of his father's throne.' In 1847, we find the duchess writing as follows: 'There are subjects which make me blush as I open the newspapers. I am saddened to my very soul by the general disquietude, the disaffections, the discredit. . . . . We need a reaction. To repress the mischief, an able hand is wanted; to cure it, a sympathising heart. Alas! my thoughts can only fix on one prince who comprehended this epoch. . . . . What will our future be? This thought disturbs my nights and my solitary hours. The mischief is deep rooted, since it taints popular morality. Is it transient, or a symptom of decline?'

These questionings were soon to be answered by the crisis of the 24th of February 1848. Without commenting on its causes or consequences—both well known—we follow the duchess through its trying scenes. The king had abdicated, had left the Tuileries, believing that his departure would appease the tumults, and make way to the throne for his little grandson. The Duke of Nemours remained with the duchess. But no sooner had Louis-Philippe left his palace than royalty itself was endangered. The insurgents were trying to shake the railings of the inner court. The Duchess of Orleans was only surrounded by her household and by some deputies, who pressed the regency upon her as the last hope of saving the monarchy. 'Impossible,' replied she; 'I cannot sustain such a responsibility; it transcends my powers. No one is prepared to see me regent, and I, less than any other.' As she was speaking, the shots come nearer—a few moments, and the Tuileries will be invaded. She can still fly, save herself and her children, or attempt, at the peril of their life and her own, to preserve the crown for the Count of Paris, and to defend the rights which France has given him.

Her duty now seemed to her clearly pointed out; she felt neither hesitation nor alarm. Taking her boys by the hand, she traversed the long galleries which led to her own apartment, and stood still with them under their father's portrait.* 'It is here we must die,' she calmly said; then gave orders to throw open all doors, ready to suffer, and to see her children suffer, a dreadful death, if her courage failed to subjugate the inconstant temperament of the frantic mob, whose cries already reached her ear.' At that moment, two deputies entered—led her to the Chamber of Deputies. The crowd, just then well disposed towards her, cried: 'Long live the Duchess of Orleans. Long live the Count of Paris.' Forming a wall on each side of her, they divided, and the princess passed through, leading the Count of Paris by the hand, his little brother—sick, wrapped up in a cloak—being carried behind them.

When the princess entered the assembly, the disorder was extreme. Lamartine describes thus her appearance there: 'She was dressed in mourning; her veil, half raised, disclosed a countenance, the melancholy of which enhanced its beauty. No man could look on her unmoved. Her blue eyes wandered over the hall, as if to implore aid. . . . . Her slight and fragile form inclined before the sounds of the applause with which she was greeted.' But a brave heart sustained that fragile form. Some of her friends, frightened by the growing tumult, implored her to depart. 'If I do, my son will never return here;' and she remained motionless, though the heat was so great, that the poor children could hardly breathe. M. de Lamartine rose to speak. The duchess had sufficient insight into his views and character to entertain no hopes from any address of his. He began by professing his chivalrous devotion to her, and ended by demanding a provisional government. Loud applause ensued; the mob rushing in, levelled their muskets at the royal widow's head. She remained perfectly calm, even when almost forced away by her friends, till in the struggle she lost hold of her eldest boy's hand, and then, indeed, her screams rang through the hall louder than all the tumult: 'My children, my children!' They had been upset, trampled on, but they were safe; they were restored to her, and at once she regained her self-possession, and took counsel with those around her. The Invalides offered the nearest shelter. She would go there. The governor was ill, unable to leave his room; he had but a small number of old soldiers under his command; he could not insure their obedience to others. 'Let the orders be given in my name,' said the princess unhesitatingly. The marshal submits that the Hospital of the Invalides is ill garrisoned and ill supplied. 'Never mind, marshal,' she replied; 'this place will do very well to die in, if we have no hope; to remain in, if we are able to defend ourselves.' Joined by the Duke of Nemours, she still counselled resistance, listened and replied with perfect serenity, sustained not by excitement, but by what she firmly believed her duty. As the day wore on, further advices came, all strongly urging her departure from the Invalides, all warning her of imminent danger. 'Does any one here counsel me to remain?' she inquired. 'So long as there is one, one single person who thinks it advisable that I should stay, I will do so. My son's life is more to me than his crown; but if his life be necessary for the good of France, a king, even a king of nine years old, should know how to die.' It was proposed to her that she should secretly leave, and conceal herself in some neighbouring house, ready to return on the morrow, provided that the Invalides could be duly garrisoned. But her generous nature refused to subject the old soldiers to a danger she did not share. 'Either

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* On January 1843, she had written: 'All my important actions must be done under the eye of this portrait.'

I decidedly remain, or decidedly go,' she replied. Events were too strong for her. Go, she must; but she will submit to no disguise. She indignantly refuses to doff her own attire. 'If taken, I will be taken as a princess,' she said; and all that affectionate importunity could do was to tear off some lace that covered her gown. As she drove off from Paris, she turned to the friends she left, and said: 'One word—to-morrow, or ten years hence, and I return.'

No, she was not to return. A secure home in England—pleasant wanderings in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy—the enjoyment of family love and concord, and of 'nature,' that 'never does betray the heart that loves her;' perfect satisfaction in the opening character of the sons to whose education she had devoted her widowed life, hopes for their future no doubt sanguine enough to overleap probability; the reverent tenderness of devoted friends, the joy of doing kindnesses: all these were to be hers, but never, never more a return to the France she had so loved and trusted. 'Ten years hence,' and the checkered life was about to close—in exile.

Early in the May of 1858, the duchess had been diligently engaged in nursing her second son; some sleepless nights and slightly anxious days had helped perhaps to shake further the delicate constitution so shaken already.

On the 11th of May she had a cold, and took to her bed. From the first, her weakness was greater than it should have been from so slight an ailment; but who fears a mere cold? She, always regardless of self, attached no importance to it whatsoever, conversed with her wonted animation, especially with her sons. The doctor begged her to speak less, for fear of exciting the fits of coughing. 'At least let me look at them,' she pleaded.

It was difficult to prevail upon her to let herself be nursed; her chief dread seemed to be that of giving trouble. Still she grew weaker and weaker. On the evening of the 17th she bade her sons good-night in her usual words, 'God bless you, my children.' They left her without a fear. They little dreamed it was the last good-night they would ever hear from her lips. Still she grew weaker. The doctor gave her food, wine—the vital powers did not rally. Always thoughtful for others, she held out the wine-glass to her attendant: 'You too, like me, want strengthening. Drink this.' She was anxious that all around her should go to rest. 'I think I shall sleep, *sleep well*,' she said. They gave her cordials every half hour. Still that unconquerable weakness!—no suffering. She went on quietly saying: 'I am going to sleep so well.' The doctor felt her pulse. 'You think, then, that I am very ill?' He evaded the question. 'But you, madame, how do you feel yourself?' 'Why, not ill. I have often been thus—I should like to rest.' He retired to the adjoining room. The friend who watched near its door felt that the profound silence was growing intolerable; she pointed it out to the doctor. They re-entered the room. For him, one look was enough. But the women who stood by had seen no change pass over the calm face they watched, save that it had grown paler than ever. 'So he giveth his beloved sleep!'

A SPIRITUAL SUBPŒNA.

Some dozen years ago, I passed a couple of early summer months in Devonshire, fishing: changing one picturesque scene of sport for another, always disbelieving that I should find so fair a place as that last quitted, and always having pleasantly to acknowledge myself wrong. There is indeed an almost inexhaustible treasure of delicious nooks in that fertile county, which comprehends every element of landscape beauty—coast and inland, hill and valley, moor and woodland—and excels in nothing more than in its curved rivers. What cliff-like and full-foliaged banks about their sources, and what rich meadows sprinkled with unrivalled kine, as they broaden towards the sea! At the close of my tour, I was lodging in a farmhouse near a branch of the Exe, rather regretful at the thought of so soon having to shoulder my knapsack and return to native Dorset, near a certain provincial town of which county, and in a neighbourhood without a tree within sight, or a stream within sound, it was my lot to dwell. We had lately thrown out a bow-window to the drawing-room there, but why, I cannot tell, for there was certainly nothing to see from it. What a difference between such a spot and my then abode, from the windows of which a score of miles of undulating and varied landscape could be discerned, with the old cathedral towers of the capital city standing grandly up against the southern sky!

It is not true that people who live in picturesque places do not appreciate them, but only that they require to be made to understand their good-fortune. Michael Courtenay, the goodman of the farm, and like all his class, a thorough stay-at-home, could not discover what I found in that look-out from his house to make such a fuss about; but his wife, who had once paid a visit to her son when in business at Birmingham, knew perfectly well. Concerning which son Robert, by the by, there was a sad tale. He was the only child of the good pair, and one who should have been there at Cowlees, the right hand of his father, and the comfort of his loving mother; but the young man had decided otherwise. He had never taken to farming, but had grieved his father hugely by a hankering after mechanical studies, which the old agriculturist associated almost with the black art itself. Thinking himself to have a gift for the practical sciences, Robert had got apprenticed in Birmingham, and for some time bade fair to acquit himself well. But it had not been farming to which he was in reality averse, so much as to restraint of any kind; and finding, after a little, that he could not be his own master at the lathe, any more than at the plough, he forsook his second calling likewise. This had justly angered Michael, and drawn from him, on the return of the lad, certain expressions which his young spirit undutifully resented. There was a violent scene in that peaceful homestead of Cowlees one day; and the next morning, when the house was astir, it was found that Robert had gone away in the night-time, nor had he since either returned home or written of his whereabouts.

It was a year ago and more by this time, during which period Mrs Courtenay had grown older than in the half-dozen years before, while the old man himself, said the farm-people, had altered to the full as much as she, although, for his part, he never owned to it. It was not he who told me of the matter, but the gudewife, who was fond of me—as my vanity was obliged to confess—mainly because I was of the age of her lost lad, and so reminded her of him. I slept in the very room which had formerly been her Robert's, and a very comfortable little room it was.

Here it was, very early one May morning, before even the earliest risers of the farm were up, that I was awakened by these three words, pronounced close by me in the distinctest tones: 'The ferryman waits.'

So perfectly conscious was I of having been really addressed, that I sat up in my bed at once, and replied: 'Well, and what is that to me?' before the absurdity of the intimation had time to strike me. The snow-white curtains of the little bed were completely undrawn, so that no person could have been hidden behind them. Although it was not broad daylight, every object was clearly discernible, and through the half-opened window came the cool, delicious summer air with quickening fragrance. I heard the dog rattle his chain in the yard as he came out of his kennel and shook himself, and then returned to it lazily, as though it was not time to be up yet. A cock crew, but very unsatisfactorily, leaving off in the middle of his performance, as though he had been mistaken in the hour. My watch, a more reliable chronicler, informed me that it wanted a quarter of four o'clock. I was not accustomed to be awakened at such a time as that, and turned myself somewhat indignantly on the pillow, regretful that I had eaten clotted cream for supper the preceding evening. I lay perfectly still, with my eyes shut, endeavouring, since I could not get to sleep again, to account for the peculiar nature of my late nightmare, as I had made up my mind to consider it, until the cuckoo clock on the oaken stair outside struck four. The last note of the mechanical bird had scarcely died away, when again, close to my pillow, I heard uttered, not only with distinctness, but with a most unmistakable earnestness, the same piece of information which had once so startled me already: 'The ferryman waits.'

Then I got up, and looked under the little bed, and behind it; into the small cupboard where my one change of boots was kept, and where there was scarcely room for anything else. I sounded the wall nearest my bed's head, and found it solid enough; it was also an outside wall; nor from any of the more remote ones could so distinct a summons have come. Then I pushed the window-casement fully back, and thrust my head and bare neck into the morning air. If I was still asleep, I was determined to wake myself, and then, if I should hear the mysterious voice again, I was determined to obey it. I was not alarmed, nor even disturbed in my mind, although greatly interested. The circumstances of my position precluded any supernatural terror. The animals in the farm-yard were lying in the tumbled straw close by, and near enough to be startled at a shout of mine; some pigeons were already circling round the dovecote, or pacing, sentinel-like, the little platforms before their domiciles; and the sound of the lasher, by whose circling eddies I had so often watched for trout, came cheerily and with inviting tone across the dewy meadows. The whole landscape seemed instinct with new-born life, and to have thoroughly shaken off the solemnity of dreary night. Its surpassing beauty and freshness so entirely took possession of me indeed, that in its contemplation I absolutely forgot the inexplicable occurrence which had brought me to the window. I was wrapped in the endeavour to make out whether those tapering lines, supporting, as it appeared, a mass of southern cloud, were indeed the pinnacles of the cathedral, when close by my ear, close by, as though the speaker had his face at the casement likewise, the words were a third time uttered: 'The ferryman waits.'

There was a deeper seriousness in its tone on this occasion, an appeal which seemed to have a touch of pathos as well as gloom; but it was the same voice, and one which I shall never forget. I did not hesitate another moment, but dressed myself as quickly as I could, and descending the stairs, took down the vast oaken door-bar, and let myself out, as I had been wont to do when I went betimes a-fishing. Then I strode southward along the footpath leading through the fields to where the river-ferry was, some three miles off, now doubting, now believing, that the ferryman *did* wait there at such an unusually early hour, and for me. I made such good use of my legs, that it was not five o'clock when I reached the last meadow that lay between me and the stream; it was higher ground than its neighbour land, and every step I took I was looking eagerly to come in sight of the ferry-house, which was on the opposite bank, and by no means within easy hailing distance. At last, I did so, and observed, to my astonishment, that the boat was not at its usual moorings. It must needs, therefore, have been already brought over upon my own side. A few steps further brought me into view of it, with the ferryman standing up in the stern leaning on his punt-pole, and looking intently in my direction. He gave a great 'hollo' when he recognised me, and I returned it, for we were old acquaintances.

'Well, Master Philip,' cried he, as I drew nearer, 'you are not here so very much betimes, after all; I have been waiting for you nigh upon half an hour.'

'Waiting for *me?*' echoed I. 'I don't know how that can be, since nobody knew that I was coming; and indeed I didn't know it myself, till'—— And there I stopped myself upon the very verge of confessing myself to have been fooled by a voice. Perhaps the ferryman himself may be concerned in the trick, thought I, and is now about to charge me roundly for being taken across out of hours.

'Well, sir,' returned the Genius of the River, turning his peakless cap hind before, which was his fashion when puzzled, and certainly a much more polite one than that common to his brethren of the land, of scratching their heads—'all I can say is, as I was roused at half-past three or so by a friend of yours, saying as though you would be wanting me in a little on the north bank.'

'What friend was that?' inquired I.

'Nay, sir, for that matter, I can't say, since I didn't see him, but I *heard* him well enough at all events, and as plain as I now hear you. I was asleep when he first called me from outside yonder, and could scarcely make any sense of it; but the second time I was wide awake; and the third time, as I was undoing the window, there could be no mistake about—"Be ready for Philip Reaton on the nor' bank," he said.'

'And how was it you missed seeing my friend?' inquired I, as carelessly as I could.

'He was in such a hurry to be gone, I reckon, that as soon as he heard my window open, and knew he had roused me, he set off. His voice came round the east corner of the cottage, as though he went Exeter way. I wouldn't have got up at such a time, and at such a summons, for many other folks but you, I do assure you, Master Philip.'

'Thank you,' said I, though by no means quite convinced; 'you're a good fellow, and here's five shillings for you. And now, put me across, and shew me the nearest way by which I can get to the city.'

Now if, by some inscrutable means, the ferryman—who had become the leading figure in my mind because of the mysterious warning—or any accomplice of his had played me a trick, and trumped up a story for my further bewilderment, they had not, I flattered myself, very much cause for boasting. I had evinced but slight curiosity about the unknown gentleman who had heralded my approach at daylight, and I had given them to understand that I had a real object in my early rising—that of reaching the capital city, at least ten miles away. But my own brain was, for all that, a prey to the most conflicting suggestions, not one of which was of final service towards an explanation of the events of the morning.

There was I, at a little after 5 A. M., with a walk before me of ten, and a walk behind me of three good Devon miles, breakfastless, without the least desire to reach the place I was bound for—and all because of a couple of *vox-et-præterea-nihil* s, voices without a body between them. I consumed the way in mentally reviewing all the circumstances of the case again and again, and by no means in a credulous spirit; but when I at length arrived at the city upon the hill, I was as far from the solution of the matter as when I started. That the ferryman himself, a simple countryman, should be concerned in any practical joke upon *me*, a mere fly-fishing acquaintance of a couple of weeks' standing; or that such persons as the Courtenays should have permitted the playing of it upon a guest at Cowlees, was only less astounding than the perfection of the trick itself—if trick it really was. But neither my feelings of anger, when I looked on the matter in that light, nor those of mystery, when I took the more supernatural view of it, in anywise interfered with the gradual growth of appetite; and when I turned into a private room of the *Bishop's Head* in the High Street, the leading idea in my mind, after all my cogitations, was Breakfast. If seven-and-forty mysterious voices had informed me that the ferryman was waiting *then*, I should have responded: 'Then let him wait—at all events, while I eat a beefsteak and sundries.'

Although Exeter is as picturesque and venerable a city as any raven could desire to dwell in, it is not a lively town by any means, in a general way. A quiet, saintly, solemn spot, indeed, it is; excellently adapted for a sinner to pass his last days in—although he would probably find them among the longest in his life—and peculiarly adapted to that end in its very great benefit of (episcopal) clergy; but for a hale young gentleman of nineteen to find himself therein at nine o'clock on a fine summer morning, with nothing to do, and all the day to do it in, was an embarrassing circumstance.

'Nothing going on, as usual, I suppose?' inquired I, with a yawn at the waiter, when I had finished a vast refection.

'Going on, sir? Yessir. City very gay, indeed, sir, just now. Assizes, sir, now sitting. Murder case —very interesting for a young gentleman like yourself, indeed, sir.'

'How do you know what is interesting?' retorted I, with the indignation of hobbledehoyhood at having its manhood called in question. 'Young gentleman, indeed! I am a man, sir. But what about this murder? Is the prisoner convicted?'

'Convicted, sir? Nossir; not yet, sir. We hope he will be convicted this morning, sir. It's a very bad case, indeed, sir. A journeyman carpenter, one Robert Moles, have been and murdered a toll-keeper —killed him in the dead of night, sir, with a 'atchet; and his wife's the witness against him.'

'That's very horrible,' remarked I. 'I didn't know a wife could give evidence.'

'Nossir, not *his* wife, sir; it's the toll-keeper's wife, sir. She swears to this Moles, although it happened two months ago or more, sir. Murder will out, they say; and how true it is! He'll be hung in front of the jail, sir, in a hopen place upon an 'ill, so as almost everybody will be able to see it, bless ye!'

'I should like to hear the end of this trial—very much, indeed, waiter.'

'Should you, sir?' fondling his chin. 'It couldn't be done, sir—it could *not* be done; the court is crowded into a mash already. To be sure, I've got a —— But no, sir, it could *not* be done.'

'I suppose it's merely a question of How much?' said I, taking out my purse. 'Didn't you say you had a' ——

'A cousin as is a javelin-man, yessir. Well, I don't know but what it *might* be done, sir, if you'll just wait till I've cleared away. There, they're at it already!'

While he spoke, a fanfaronade of trumpets without proclaimed that the judges were about to take their seats, and in a few minutes the waiter and I were among the crowd. The javelin-man, turning out to be amenable to reason and the ties of relationship, as well as not averse to a small pecuniary recompense, I soon found standing-room for myself in the court-house, where every seat had been engaged for hours before. As I had been informed, the proceedings were all but concluded, save some unimportant indirect evidence, and the speech of the prisoner's counsel. This gentleman had been assigned to the accused by the court, since he had not provided himself with any advocate, nor attempted to meet the tremendous charge laid against him, except by a simple denial. All that had been elicited from him since his apprehension, it seemed, was this: that the toll-keeper's wife was mistaken in his identity, but that he had led a wandering life of late, and could not produce any person to prove an *alibi;* that he was in Dorsetshire when the murder was done, miles away from the scene of its commission; but at what place on the particular day in question—the 5th of March—he could not recall to mind. This, taken in connection with strong condemnatory evidence, it was clear, would go sadly against him with the jury, as a lame defence indeed; although, as it struck *me* who had only gleaned this much from a bystander, nothing was more natural than that a journeyman carpenter, who was not likely to have kept a diary, should not recollect what place he had tramped through upon any particular date. Why, where had I myself been on the 5th of March? thought I. It took me several minutes to remember, and I only did so by recollecting that I had left Dorsetshire on the day following, partly in consequence of some alterations going on at home. Dorsetshire, by the by, did the prisoner say? Why, surely I had seen that face somewhere before, which was now turned anxiously and hurriedly around the court, and now, as if ashamed of meeting so many eyes, concealed in his tremulous hands! Robert Moles! No, I had certainly never heard that name; and yet I began to watch the poor fellow with a singular interest, begotten of the increasing conviction that he was not altogether a stranger to me.

The evidence went on and concluded; the counsel for the prisoner did his best, but his speech was, of necessity, an appeal to mercy rather than to justice. All that had been confided to him by his client was this: that the young man was a vagabond, who had deserted his parents, and run away from his indentures, and was so far deserving of little pity; that he had, however, only been vicious, and not criminal: as for the murder with which he was now charged, the commission of such a hideous outrage had never entered his brain. 'Did the lad look like a murderer? Or did he not rather resemble the Prodigal Son, penitent for his misdeeds indeed, but not weighed down by the blood of a fellow-creature?'

All this was powerfully enough expressed, but it was not evidence; and the jury, without retiring from their box, pronounced the young man 'Guilty,' amid a silence which seemed to corroborate the verdict. Then the judge put on the terrible black cap, and solemnly inquired for the last time whether Robert Moles had any reason to urge why sentence should not be passed upon him.

'My lord,' replied the lad in a singularly low soft voice, which recalled the utterer to my recollection on the instant, 'I am wholly innocent of the dreadful crime of which I am accused, although I confess I see in the doom that is about to be passed upon me a fit recompense for my wickedness and disobedience. I was, however, until informed of it by the officer who took me into custody, as ignorant of this poor man's existence as of his death.'

'My lord,' cried I, speaking with an energy and distinctness that astonished myself, 'this young man has spoken the truth, as I can testify.'

There was a tremendous sensation in the court at this announcement, and it was some minutes before I was allowed to take my place in the witness-box.

The counsel for the crown objected to my becoming evidence at that period of the proceedings at all, and threw himself into the legal question with all the indignation which he had previously exhibited against the practice of midnight murder; but eventually the court overruled him, and I was sworn.

I stated that I did not know the prisoner by name, but that I could swear to his identity. I described how, upon the 5th of March last, the local builder, being in want of hands, had hired the accused to assist in the construction of a bow-window in the drawing-room of our house in Dorsetshire.

The counsel for the prosecution, affecting to disbelieve my sudden recognition of the prisoner, here requested to know whether any particular circumstance had recalled him to my mind, or whether I had only a vague and general recollection of him.

'I had only that,' I confessed, 'until the prisoner spoke: his voice is peculiar, and I remember very distinctly to have heard it upon the occasion I speak of; he had the misfortune to tread upon his foot-rule and break it, while at work upon the window, and I overheard him lamenting that occurrence.'

Here the counsel for the accused reminded the court that a broken foot-rule had been found upon the prisoner's person, at the time of his apprehension.

Within some five minutes, in short, the feelings of judge, jury, and spectators entirely changed; and the poor young fellow at the bar, instead of having sentence of death passed upon him, found himself, through my means, set very soon at liberty. He came over to me at the inn to express his sense of my prompt interference, and to beg to know how he might shew his gratitude. 'I am not so mean a fellow as I seem,' said he; 'and I hope, by God's blessing, to be yet a credit to the parents to whom I have behaved so ill.'

'What is your real name?' inquired I, struck by a sudden impulse.

'My real name,' replied the young man, blushing deeply, 'is Courtenay, and my home, where I hope to be to-night, is at Cowlees Farm, across the Exe.'

And so I had not been called so mysteriously at four o'clock in the morning, without a good and sufficient reason, after all.

A TRIP TO THE TARTAN.

Our trip is not to the Highlands, to see the tartan worn: we may enjoy that sight nearer home; in one form or other, it meets us every day upon the street. It adorns the sovereign, and is to be found upon the beggar. Our trip is to see something of its manufacture, in one of its principal seats.

The train has dropped us at Stirling, the scene and centre of many historical associations of deepest interest. Standing upon the height crowned by its castle, we stand where many a doughty deed has been done. While looking in one direction, our eye falls on the field of Bannockburn, once the scene of fiercest conflict between nations now truly one, and living together as brethren. Yonder lies the 'Shirra Muir;' and yonder, the field of Falkirk; and yonder, again, from that height, Wallace and his followers rushed down to do one of his most heroic deeds. It is eastward that our course lies. Our terminus is the village of Tillicoultry, lying at the base of the evergreen Ochils, which shelter from the north the beauteous valley of the Devon.

Our visit is to the works of Messrs Paton, the first to introduce the *soft* tartan into this district, and by far the largest manufacturers in the trade, though all they make is but one item in the quantity produced from Stirling on to Kinross.

That tartan is very ancient, must at once be granted; although we are not sure that we could find proof to satisfy us, that Joseph's coat of many colours was made of it, as we have heard some Highlanders argue very gravely. There are certainly few methods of producing a pleasing variety of colour in woven fabrics which can claim equal antiquity with this. Many clans can shew an origin by no means modern, and each clan has its tartan, and has had it from a date very nearly contemporaneous with its existence as a clan. Then, as in some measure still, the manufacture was strictly a home one, from the wool to the dress—the carding, spinning, dyeing, weaving, and making up being all performed at home by members of the family or dependents. Now, webs by the score, or hundred, may be seen any day at Tillicoultry and other seats of the manufacture, rivalling any that ever fair hand of chieftain's daughter spun or clansman wove. In the premises of the Messrs Paton there are fabrics which the occupant of a throne need not be ashamed to wear; and not unfrequently has the Queen herself worn the shawls and dresses which have passed through all the processes we have come to see, and through the same machines we are to have the privilege of inspecting.

Entering the gate, we find ourselves in a court, around which are the works, consisting of warehouses, spinning-mill, dye-houses, weaving-shops, &c., which fill up three sides of a parallelogram of several stories, and are flanked on two sides each by another row of buildings; while the court between, so far as convenience will admit, is occupied by an erection of a single story, under one roof. Our object is to trace the manufacture from its beginning to its close, and note the processes passed through by the wool ere it appears as tartan in a finished state—as web, shawl or plaid, ready for market.

'As you are to begin at the beginning, perhaps you would like to look into the wool-stores?' To be sure we would; and here we are, where bag on bag, and tier on tier, rise up to the roof; and as we look, we find ourselves calculating, or rather wondering what a breadth of tartan the whole will produce, what vast numbers of shoulders it shall cover, and what a multitude of fair forms it may protect. But we must not go away with the idea that each of these bags is exactly like its neighbour in its contents. Each has wool, but there is a great diversity in the quality, as there is in the localities whence it has been brought. All this grew at home, on various breeds of native sheep. This, again, is foreign—not a little being from Australia. But in the same bag there may be considerable diversities, although all is of one general character. Nay, in a single fleece, the variety in the quality is very considerable, the wool becoming coarser towards the back of the sheep. Hence, before it goes through any other process, it must be *sorted*.

This *sorting* is a nice operation, and much depends upon it. In the apartment in which it takes place we see, standing at little stalls, a number of grown men, some of them even beginning to shew signs of age, but each with his bib or pinafore notwithstanding, and carefully separating, and putting in their proper receptacles, the various qualities of wool in the heaps before them. We observe that they are very particular as to certain little articles that are found amongst the wool, which we are informed are *burs* and *hardheads*, got from the bushes, and which would greatly injure the machines. We see, too, that the wool differs very much in cleanliness, and find that it must all be scoured ere it go through the processes by which it is to be carded, straightened, laid, and twisted. We must therefore next pay a visit to the *scouring*-house, if we would follow it in its course. Here we find it in troughs, with hot water and cleansing materials, pushed, and poked, and tossed about without mercy; while, after it has undergone such treatment for a time, a fellow dashes a pitchfork amongst it, catches what he can, and throws it up to a squeezer—consisting of a series of rollers—which seizes it nimbly, and only lets it go after it has pressed from it so much of the lye in it as to leave it barely wet.

In passing to where it is thus cleansed, we have our attention called to a preparatory process through which some of it must pass, whereby the dust is pretty considerably taken out of it, by a machine which bears the horrible name of *Devil*, and whose teeth and tearing-power, as we note them, cause all wonder at the name to cease.

But here are the baskets of the well-assorted, well-cleansed wool, placed now in readiness by the *teaser*, to the side of which we have been conducted. Here, though one reason for the scouring was to take out the natural grease or oil, it must be oiled again, to give it flexibility, in all the various processes through which it has to pass. In order to effect this, it is spread upon the floor, while one whose clothes give pretty forcible testimony as to his work, shakes over it a square box containing oil, and full of holes in its lower side, very quickly, yet carefully and equably. Thus prepared, it passes through the teaser, which, as to position and appearance, is next door to the devil we saw before, and might be regarded as near akin. And now the sort of winnowing process is over, and the teats of wool are ready to be gathered and taken to the carding-machines. To these we are conducted.

The carding-machine by which we stand, and which, we believe, bears the undignified and rather personal name of a *scribbler*, consists of various drums, each several feet in diameter, covered with cards, with smaller ones occurring now and again, rolling on, taking in, and giving off from one to another. The wool is supplied to it by a girl who stands at the one end, and carefully weighing, and, it may be, sprinkling yet again with oil, fills the feeding-board as it moves on to gratify the ever-continued demand of these huge card-covered drums. This wool is most likely not all of one kind, but a mixture, in order to obtain softness and strength of thread and cloth.

But let us to the other end, and see in what condition it comes out. According to the fineness of the cloth must be the fineness of the wool and of the thread, and so much the more care must be taken to lay the fibres in such a way as that they may be drawn out and spun. By a peculiar arrangement, the web of wool is gathered up, and formed into a sort of loose rope, called a *sliver;* and here is an automatic little gentleman, whom we cannot name, who travels incessantly backward and forward, rolling off said sliver, having it in so doing 'all in his eye,' and delivering it over pulleys, at the next carding-machine, where it is laid hold of by one who is evidently a relative of his, and carefully distributed independent of any human attendant.

As to how the wool, introduced in any of these ways, is delivered at the other end of number two, depends upon circumstances. In one case, we find it fall in rowans into tin cases, and the machine tells, by the ringing of a bell, when these are full, and have to be removed. In another, the rolls are dropped into a peculiar-looking thing, not at all unlike what is put beneath the grate sometimes, in parlour or in dining-room, to receive the ashes as they fall, and keep them unseen.

Let us follow those in the tin-cases. They are taken to what is called a roving-machine or a *billy*, where they undergo a rough slack sort of spinning. But there is a contrivance which does away with the necessity for this 'roving,' and we will therefore not describe it. Instead of the wool coming from the machine in rowans, we have it issuing in *rovings*, and stored upon bobbins as the rowans were, but in a stage further forward towards the spinning proper. Following these latter bobbins, we find them put on spindles on a frame, just as the bobbins with rowans were; or passing on a little, we find the one-ended bobbins, which came off the billies, fixed in a rack to give off their contents in the working of a similar machine, and for exactly the same purpose.

Here are young persons busy taking off the one-ended bobbins filled so as to resemble cones, and carrying them away to the spinning-jennies, where they are arranged in hundreds, on a fixed frame on the outside of each, so as to give off their contents easily as may be required. Two of these jennies are placed opposite each other, and one man, assisted by two piecers, manages a pair. In spinning thus, a man with his two piecers will have as many as 600 or 800 threads twisting at the same time. But even the spinner—the full-grown man—has in some instances been dispensed with; for, having satisfied our curiosity in this case, we are brought to another apartment, and find a *self-acting mule*, superintended by four boys, doing apparently as much work, and doing it as well; while all that the boys have to do is to supply material, to act as piecers, and to remove the bobbins when filled.

The thread, then, is spun. We must follow it till it become the cloth, and is sent forth for sale and wear. And first must we be introduced into the dyer's region. The dye-house is so full of steam or vapour, we can scarcely see at first. By and by, however, either from the condensation of the vapour, or our being accustomed to it, we discern something of the place. On every hand are caldrons, huge kettles, or vats, in which there is going on a perpetual bubble-bubble, till their contents be at the proper heat. Most of them are heated by steam, but some by furnace, as, for some colours, the latter is found to answer best. The yarn hangs into the vat from batons of wood, which lie across the top; and men are perpetually busy lifting up these, dipping the yarn, advancing it a little round, and plunging it again among the liquor. The colours are various. One vat seems to have a liquor without any colour; but the men are as busy there as at the others, while the yarn appears unaltered, except, perhaps, that it seems a little less pure in the white than it was. We are told that is not a dyeing vat, but one in which the yarn is prepared for the dye by being dipped in a *mordant*. Out from these vats the yarn comes, with hues as varied as those of the rainbow, and which it will take long wear and great exposure to dim in any great degree, when that yarn has been manufactured into the beautiful fabrics for which this firm are distinguished.

And here is something like a drying-machine! The outer part is a cylinder of iron; in the interior is a wire-cage of similar shape, but a little less, and so connected with machinery as that, when it is put in gearing, it revolves with tremendous velocity. Into this cage, as we stand beside, some yarn quite wet, and of a scarlet colour, is put. The machine is set in motion, and the speed becomes such that we can distinguish nothing but a rim of a red colour. The gearing is altered; the motion gradually comes to a close; the yarn is lying along the side of the cage, as it had been placed, and when taken out, is almost dry. The machine is called an *exsiccator*, and the drying process takes place through centrifugal force—the same force which, as we swing anything round, gives it a tendency to fly off. By that force, made to act most intensely through the great rapidity with which the cage is whirled, the yarn, with the water it holds in its mass, has a strong tendency to fly off; but the yarn is retained by the wires, while the wet passes through, and striking on the outer cylinder, runs down, and is carried away by a pipe at the bottom.

We have seen a similar machine used in a public establishment for the drying of clothes, and it answered its purpose well. The yarn thus dyed, washed, and finally and fully dried in the stove, is laid up for use as may be required.

We follow the yarn thus dyed and dried, and find it next in the hands of the *winders*. It has again to be put on two-ended bobbins, or spools, for warp, and on one-ended bobbins, or pirns, for weft. The spools are not unfrequently given out to be filled. In such a case, they and the yarn given out are weighed; and the filled bobbins and waste returned are again weighed. This secures carefulness, and prevents pilfering, to which the children are very much tempted by the candy-rock gentry, who, by encouraging them to bring all kinds of yarn for their trash, do much to break down a sense of strict honesty in their minds. These bobbins are for the warper, who has to arrange the threads lengthways of the web, so that when crossed by the other threads—the weft—they shall form the particular tartan desired.

Our course is next to the *weaving*-shops, where many are busy, the click-click being incessant; but our way is directed to an empty loom. The chain of warp is wound upon a round beam. Before it there hangs, right across the loom, something like a series of frameworks of net, made of twine. On more close examination, we find that, about half-way down each of these, there are eyelets, and through these the warp is drawn. These are the *heddles*, or *comb*, which shall be moved by the *treddles* below, and shall pull these warp-threads up or down, as is wished, as the weaving goes on. The threads are all through the comb, but have to be taken through the reed. This consists of a great number of slips, thicker or more open, according to the fineness of the work; and the object of it is that, being fixed in the *lay*, it may be used in driving home the threads of weft, as these are thrown from side to side by the shuttle. All this is done; a rod has been attached to the loose end of the warp, and fastened by cords passing over the breast-beam of the loom to a roller underneath, on which the cloth shall be wound up as it is woven. And now the weaver takes his seat, attaches a stretcher to keep the web at its proper breadth, and fixing a pirn filled with the proper colour in his shuttle, moves the treddles with his feet—one part of the heddles rises up, the other sinks down, and there is a way opened between two rows of warp-threads for his shuttle to fly, which he makes it do by a peculiar jerk of his right hand, which sends it to the other side. With his left, he brings the lay with its reed towards himself, and thus drives home the thread of weft. Thus he proceeds, carefully attending to the colours he is to put in, and the number of shots of his shuttle to each, and replacing his shuttle, as occasion may require, by another from the rack, in which he has them all placed ready to his hand. There is a shuttle for each colour, so that the number of the shuttles depends upon the number of the colours. The pirns are filled by winders, with the weft-yarn. This has to be done very carefully, for the pirn is fixed in the shuttle, and the thread must come off at the point, easily as the shuttle flies. If there be a hack, if the thread has been allowed to accumulate forward, and then the winder has gone back behind that in filling, the thread is sure to break, and cause annoyance or injury. Skill is necessary to one who fills pirns by the hand, in building up the thread properly. Recently, a pirn-filling *machine* has been introduced, which makes no mistakes, and which, tended by one person, does the work of many.

The looms we have been looking at are hand-looms, wrought by weavers—all *males*. We must pay a visit, ere we are done with the weaving department, to the *power-loom* shed, in the court. This is the building formerly referred to as filling up a large portion of the court, as of one story, and under one roof. Here we find several rows of looms worked by machinery, and tended by *females*. We are told that it was with very considerable difficulty the power-loom could be adapted to the woollen manufacture, especially to the tartan. Now, the ease and accuracy we observe would indicate that the difficulties have been overcome. The weaving process is just the same as with the hand, only the machinery does a great part of the weaver's work—all of it that is laborious. We notice that, by a very ingenious contrivance, the peculiar snack for driving the shuttle is perfectly imitated, and the result completely attained; and that by another contrivance, equally ingenious, the shuttle-rack moves up or down right opposite the course the shuttle has to take, and brings at the proper time the proper shuttle to be sent on its course. As the weaving progresses, the attendant has to supply pirns, mend threads, and do other light little matters that may be required; the machinery itself moves forward the warp, keeps the web at its proper width, and rolls up the cloth as it is woven.

We have supposed our web a continuous one; but shawls and plaids constitute not a small portion of the tartan manufacture. In a web of shawls, there are run a few threads of cotton up the side of the warp, when it is put in the loom, so far distant, however, from the main body of the web as to be sufficient for fringes. The shuttle flies to the outside of these threads, and so a part of the weft, thus thrown, has no warp; and then, when the square of the shawl has been attained along the web, as much is left unwoven of the warp as shall be sufficient fringes for the shawl finished and the next. Thus, in one way, the warp affords the fringe, and in the other the weft.

Other processes! Several yet. Each web is stretched over a desk, and carefully examined; every double thread is extracted, every knot or twist is taken out, everything, in short, is removed which would interfere with its finish, or which, if left, would be a blemish. And now it is hoisted shoulder-high, and carried across to the *wauk-mill* or *fulling*-mill, where, along with several of its neighbours, it is put into a trough with fuller's-earth and water, and on it two enormous beetles are made to play splash, splash. Thereby the fuller's-earth is brought in contact with the unctuous matter still in the cloth; and when we express a fear that the cloth will be torn, our attention is called to the fact, that the faces of the beetles are covered with *gutta-percha*—the best facing yet found for the beetles—thus presenting a smooth, yet sufficiently hard substance to the cloth. But the fulling is over, and the web seems thicker and closer and shrunk in length and breadth. It is carefully washed in pure water till perfectly clean; and after having had time to drip, and being afterwards wrung, to free it yet further from the moisture, it is taken outside, if the weather will at all permit, to the *tenters*. These are large frames fixed in the ground, having the lower bar movable. The web is fixed to the bars by means of hooks, driven so as to have their points at an angle to the line of tension; the lever is applied, and the lower bar moves downward, and being secured at the proper distance, the web, being yet further stretched lengthways, is left to dry.

From the tenters the webs are taken to the finishing-room, where they are again examined and picked. The finer are put through a machine which divests them of all superfluous hairs. This machine has a fixed steel edge, over which the cloth is stretched, and over which it moves when the machine is put in motion. Right above, and coming down on that so as exactly to allow of the web passing between, is a roller, about which knives or cutters are wound spirally, and which, when set to work, take off the hairs most completely and expeditiously. As it whirls, you see nothing but a continuous bright appearance, and you have the idea that it were a very dangerous thing to get your fingers any way into the power of such a whittle. Wo betide the web, if there be knots or twists, or anything that rises above the general level, as the cloth passes on, for, in such a case, a hole is the certain consequence. Hence the necessity for great carefulness in examining the cloth which is to be subjected to such a process.

Still further towards finishing, we find the webs stretched equably over stout sheets of pasteboard, and placed sometimes with hot plates interspersed on a hydraulic-press, which, with a force equal to many tons, holds them in its embrace for a time sufficient to make all beautifully smooth and glossy; or they are made to pass between cylinders heated by the introduction of steam into the interior, a more recent plan, but as effective. The pieces are then rolled up, the shawls and plaids folded and laid aside till about to be sent forth to the merchant, when again the Bramah does its work in diminishing the bulk, and giving neatness to the bales, which leave at times in numbers fitted to excite the question, whither do they all go? Where, in the world, will all that, and all besides made in this district and elsewhere, find wearers?

In looking to the woollen manufacture in its earlier processes, it seems a very dirty one, and we should at first probably pronounce it very unhealthy. The very opposite, however, is the case. Dr Simpson of Edinburgh has called attention to this fact, and founded on it a curative or medicinal application of oil to the human body. Long before he had done so, and while resident for a few years in the district, we had noticed the fact; indeed, it was pressed upon our attention. We were brought much in contact with the young, and often observed that poor, miserable, emaciated, consumptive-looking children coming into the district, no sooner got work in the mills as piecers, than their appearance began to improve, and in six months they had become stout and rosy, and in vigorous health. We thought then, as we believe still, that the great cause of this was the *absorption* of the oil by their bodies, and the *inhaling* of it as it floated on vapour in the atmosphere. We were convinced, from what we then saw, of the great curative and nourishing effect of oil, applied externally or taken internally, and have often thought, that if the vapour could be inhaled, as in these mills, disease of the lungs might be arrested or prevented. We don't know any sanatorium for a poor, weak, *shilpit* boy or girl like a woollen-mill; and many a nobleman or gentleman could do nothing better for his weakly heir than send him to be a piecer, for a twelvemonth, in such an establishment.

At the first introduction of the soft-tartan manufacture into this district, by Messrs Paton, thirty years ago, and for long after, the great amount of tartan was of *clan*-patterns. While this was the case, the trade was a much safer and steadier one than now; because, if there was no great demand at a time, there was but little risk in 'making stock' of what were known as favourite clans. All is now changed. Clan-tartans are not altogether discarded, but *fancy* rules; and it is a question whether a particular tartan will take the market or not, and hence the risk. The consequence is, there cannot be the making to stock as there once was, and so there are many more ups and downs in the trade than there were. It cannot be helped—the public taste must be consulted. This firm have been very fortunate in many of the patterns they have brought out. The Victoria tartan, so universally admired, was one of their first, if not the first, and it holds its place. We have seen their manufacture in that tartan on the person of her Majesty, and as hangings in the palace of Balmoral.

We shall say little of the members of the firm. Not that we could not, but that they are amongst those who care not to have their worthy deeds rehearsed. Their character as employers may be gathered from the fact, that many of those in their employment have been with them for long periods—some of them for very long; and that it is a general remark amongst those in the district: 'If we get in to Paton's, our bread is baken, if we behave ourselves.'

THE TWO TRAVELLERS.

Everybody who has travelled—that is to say, in this locomotive age, everybody who can see—is aware that there are two travellers, who perpetually haunt the scenery both of England and the continent. Not that they travel together—far from it; on the contrary, they never meet, one being always a day or two behind the other; and as they always keep to the same line of road, like the 9.15 and the 4.50 expresses from Paddington, it would be a very extraordinary accident that should ever bring them together. In fact, one is always pursuing, and the other being pursued, like the spectre wolf and hounds of the German forests, except that the hunted one never has any idea that there is anybody after him.

These travellers may be called the Sentimental and the Facetious. No. 1, the Sentimental, is the one for whose especial benefit guide-books are written; he is *the* traveller to whom they are always addressed. 'The traveller will do this;' 'the traveller will observe that;' 'the traveller will recall the lines of Byron.' And the sentimental traveller always *does* recall the lines of Byron. He is the most obedient of cicerone*es*. He always has his enthusiasm about him, cut and dried, and lights it up as easily as another man would his tobacco. Whether he goes to see a water-fall or a mountain, or a lake or the scene of a battle, or any other historical event, he is equally affected. He is well up in all the associations—that is to say, in all that the guide-book mentions. And not only is he excited himself, but the cause of excitement in other people. In the next traveller's book he meets with at an inn, he communicates his impressions to the world in some burning words of eloquent prose, or, more rarely, in a few sweet lines of immortal verse. Travellers' books are his delight, and Switzerland, where they abound, is his paradise. If he goes up the Righi, he writes thus in the book at his next halting-place: 'O glorious view that burst upon my eyes this morning! Can I ever forget how the earth lay locked in silence and in darkness, till glorious Phœbus, driving his fiery chariot from beyond the peaks of Caucasus, flamed upon the view, lighting up mountain-top after mountain-top, dispersing mist after mist, revealing lake after lake, till kingdom after kingdom lay exposed to our sight, and one eye rested on the Mediterranean, the other on the Baltic!' Close on his heels follows Nemesis, in the shape of traveller No. 2, the facetious, the irreverent, the critical, and this is his commentary —'Bosh! Who ever saw anything from the Righi except mist or snow? Depend upon it, it's a do; got up for the sake of the innkeeper. Catch me ever going up a mountain again, much less getting up at four in the morning.' It is the same in Wales. At Bedgelert, the S. T. moralises thus over the grave of Gelert: 'Alas, poor Gelert! Faithful wert thou beyond human fidelity; hard was thy fate beyond human injustice,' &c. In this case, he is so pleased with his handiwork that he signs his name to it;

which instantly gives the F. T. a hold whereby to hitch him into rhyme—

To think that the Sadducees' doctrine is just,
  In future I scarce shall consider a sin,
If the shade of poor Gelert don't bark from the dust,
  And the ghost of Llewellyn pursue Mister Gwynne.

At the same place, too, it would appear that traveller No. 1, in a state of after-dinnerishness, assuming a different name, but retaining his *cacoëthes scribendi*, tried what he doubtless considered a light and airy style of composition:

Walked up Snowdon
  From Llanberris;
Drank two sodas
  And two sherries!
      —*Peter Carter.*

But No. 2 is not so to be put off. Hear how he rebukes the renegade sentimentalist:

Peter Carter! Peter Carter!
  Man of soda, man of sherry,
For this did Gelert die a martyr,
  That Peter Carter should be merry?

Perhaps the Facetious Traveller may be excused for these effusions, on the plea of their tendency to suppress a nuisance. Besides, there is the example of the great Queen Elizabeth, who, when a sentimental traveller named Walter Raleigh had written a line on a pane of glass with a diamond, condescended to complete the couplet with her own royal hand, and out of her own royal brain. But he ought to confine himself to his own game. And I cannot see what call he had to write in the book of one of the inns between Florence and Rome, after the name of a Mr Woodcock, the sporting ejaculation 'Mark!' Nor am I quite sure he was right about the Golden Lion.

The story of the Golden Lion was this: The Sentimental One, in a strange accession of practical philanthropy, had written in one of his favourite books, at some place in Switzerland, a recommendation to travellers to patronise the Golden Lion at M——, an inn kept by a poor widow with nine children. But, not content with recommending her to the charity of his countrymen alone, he adopted also the French tongue, with which he shewed less familiarity than one would have expected, judging from the raptures about Rousseau and Julie in which he indulged at Vevay. He began thus: '*Aux Français.* Allez au Lion d'Or à M——. C'est une pauvre veuve avec neuf enfants,' &c. Whereupon the inevitable F. T.—'Comment, le Lion d'Or est une veuve avec neuf enfants? Bah!' A charitable appeal ought to be above criticism. But I am strongly disposed to suspect that the F. T.'s ill-humour was to be traced to unpleasing associations connected with another Golden Lion, whereof he wrote in his native country:

The Lion house is but so-so:
  The meat was very tough;
The servants, too, were very slow;
  The dinner, not enough.

If of the landlady I write,
  A1 I cannot chalk her—
That we did not get starved outright,
  No thanks to Mistress Walker.

It might be presumed, from the energy shewn by the F. T. in behalf of the French language, that he is a cosmopolite in character; but I am bound to say that he is essentially insular. He is fond of reproving Americanisms, particularly that transatlantic phrase in which a gentleman writes himself down as accompanied by 'his lady.' He has been known, by the addition of an apostrophe and five letters, to scandalise the citizens of New York, making it appear that that respectable merchant and pious elder, Jedediah Broadway, is travelling about Europe 'with his lady's-maid.' Moreover, the F. T. is a firm opponent of the continental police, and greatly objects to write down, for their inspection, his name, præ-name, country, whence he comes, whither he is going, &c. I fear, if the police trust to the reports handed to them, they must believe that the F. T.'s name is So-and-so, that his Christian name is Mephistophiles, that he was born at Birthplace, that he is coming from home, and is going back again. There let him rest.

PECCANT RESPECTABILITIES.

A CERTAIN good Catholic, Boccaccio tells us, and one very desirous of making converts, could not persuade a young French infidel of his acquaintance, with whom he had long argued, but that the youth would go to Rome, and see for himself how Christianity was carried on at the fountain-head. The good man naturally concluded if the lad did go there and saw how the priests in reality conducted themselves, all chance of his salvation would be gone. He met him, therefore, on his return from the Eternal City, with a dismal countenance. 'I fear, my son, you come back as great a heretic as you went; is it not so, alas?'

'Nay, father,' replied the young man; 'I am now a firm believer in your faith. For, since I have seen its own ministers and especial advocates are, notwithstanding their abominable acts against it, unable to shake it, it must needs indeed have truth for its foundation.'

We must confess that it is only by an argument of this kind that we can quite account for the national belief in our 'commercial purity;' though the consciousness that England owes her chief greatness to commerce, may incline her to accord a somewhat blind admiration to her 'practical men of business,' and to exaggerate the talents necessary for the support of that particular *rôle*. We use that word advisedly, for there is scarcely any other profession which has more of the Artificial about it, or which derives more aid from costume, decoration, lacker. The very silence which reigns supreme in its temples, the solemnity which belongs to the priests and ministers of the Ledger, are themselves as 'stagey' as any of the 'slow music, lights half-down,' of the melodram and quite as unnecessary to the real performa of the work in hand.

A business-man may be 'a villain,' but there is, it seems, one comfort (which Hamlet lacked), th he may not 'smile and smile' like an honest m As for laughter in any business establishment—su a sacrilege would be considered tantamount an outbreak of bankruptcy! And yet, we supp humorous things do incidentally occur in the cou of business transactions, as they do in that of l physic, and even divinity itself. The idea may fanciful, but we cannot help imagining that endeavour to set up Gravity in the place of Wisd has something sympathetic with the recent whole substitutions of Honest Seeming for Honesty.

Surely, if any other Profession had broken dow utterly—and where it was thought to be strongest— the mercantile has done within the last ten years would have become by this time a laughing-stoc the British public.

In the book before us,* which professes to chro the principal trading frauds and failures between and 1858—and not including the Commercial C at both ends of that interval—the most memo phenomenon is not the perpetration of the but the general complicity of the Commercial with the perpetrators; the low standard of morals avowed by the cheatees as well as the cheaters; and the selfishness, deepening sometimes into actual fraud, which appears to animate the best of 'houses.'

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* *Facts, Failures, and Frauds.* By D. Morier Evans. Groombridge and Sons. 1859.

The slavish worship which seems to have been paid by the less fortunate members of the railway world, for instance, to their ex-monarch, is almost incredible; while the reliance placed upon his Facts, and especially his Figures, would, had it occurred among a less astute community, be considered childish credulity. Before the great crash took place, 'the financial power of this potentate had been regarded with a kind of enthusiasm, and the whole of the directors sought refuge under his shadow.' His colleagues were absolutely afraid to speak with him; he appeared to them like another Moses come down from a mountain more sacred than Sinai, since it was of gold, with the light (to them) Divine upon his face, of Unimaginable Riches. The snobs who cringe to Titles and Social Position, seem absolutely upright and estimable, in comparison with these worshippers of the Golden Calf. But when the long delusion at last came to an end, and these selfish speculators found their pockets empty, or full of nothingness, they became, at once, as sardonic upon their idol as they had before been supple to him.

We all remember how his Railway Majesty was fêted in the days of his splendour by Society. It was very bad of 'Society;' and yet there was something worse from the City circles. 'They who had profited by his advice, and not content with the first profits, had continued their operations throughout the career of the crisis, until, like the common gamester, they had staked their last farthing and lost, were now prepared to hound down to the death the individual whom they had before lauded to the skies as the veritable man of the age, the resuscitator of industrial prosperity, and the most successful financier of the century.'

And yet, after all, what was the head and front of the monarch's offending? According to our author, it was nothing more than what has been very commonly practised by large joint-stock concerns, adjusting accounts so as to give them the best appearance, and thereby keep up the value of shares in the market.

One of the great beauties of our perfected business system, it is averred, is its plan for detection of fraud —nay, for making fraud *impossible*—the practical checks which the commercial mind has with such wonderful sagacity adapted for every possible contingency. Notwithstanding which, one Mr Walter Watts, the humble *employé* of one of our first insurance companies, managed to ease it of some L.70,000, in the course of less than half-a-dozen years, without the breath of suspicion touching him, and in the following not very recondite manner:

'A cheque, say for L.554, 10s., represented as for annuity No. 6, was drawn and paid by the bankers, and entered by them in the pass-book. When this book came into Watts's hands, he erased the 55, thus making the payment appear L.4, 10s.; and in order to mystify the matter further, he altered the number of the annuity to 64, by adding this figure 4. But, in point of fact, no such claim existed against the company at the time as annuity No. 6; and the payments on annuity No. 64 having been previously made, a fictitious claim of L.4, 10s. appeared in the pass-book as paid, in order to provide facilities for covering the abstraction. But the difference of L.550 being still left between the payment as it appeared by the falsified entry in the pass-book and the actual amount paid, Watts had to find some means of covering the discrepancy, in order to avoid detection. For this purpose, he selected a trifling fire-loss, say of L.7, 10s., which had been paid some time before, but which had not yet been passed, and falsified that entry in the pass-book also, by adding to it the L.550, making it appear that L.557, 10s. was the sum which had been paid; and thus, by making the total addition in the book correct, perfecting the cover for the fraud.'

Besides this accurate knowledge of their own affairs, above exemplified, another triumph of our 'Practical Men,' we understand, is their thorough insight into the pecuniary position of their rivals. And yet, it would doubtless have astonished commercial circles to learn that the ancient house of Snow, Sandby, and Paul was, so early as the year 1851, 'in a state of hopeless insolvency;' and that the present 'Sir John Dean Paul's inheritance was, in fact, the chief partnership in a concern, the accounts of which, to the close of the preceding month, exhibited a *deficiency* of L.71,990;' which, as has since been proved, was the true state of the case.

'The reprehensible practice,' remarks our somewhat delicately speaking author, 'of borrowing from the bank-till for the supply of their own personal wants, seems to have been recognised and followed by all the partners in this bank from a *very* early period'—a system which afterwards seems to have been brought to great perfection by the directors of the *British, London and Eastern*, and other banks. We have, however, no space for entering upon any analysis of these Speculations (without the primal *S*), or for deciding whether or no Colonel Waugh is 'the most impudent man in the world,' as the *Times* avers. We can only afford to refer particularly to the late great Dock-warrant case, which was really a curiosity in its way. The business transactions of Mr Joseph Windle Cole were absolutely fairy-like in regard to the gossamer character of their texture, and yet you could see the 'water-mark'—the stamp of authenticity—on them too. His dock-warrants were quite unexceptionable dock-warrants, faultless, genuine, and as good as the 'promise to pay' of the Bank of England, in one sense, while in another they were worthless as the thistle-down. They represented goods which could be seen, and touched, and weighed, and, in fact, which performed every function of property except that of having the power of being moved away by the purchaser. There was a 'stop' on them in the books of the Dock Company, in favour of 'another party.' That was all. They did not belong to the last buyer, simply because they did not belong to Mr Windle—in this case *with* the primal *S*—to Mr Swindle Cole, of whom he had bought them.

This gentleman made himself proprietor of a small wharf, situate on the Thames, and suitable in several respects to his purposes. 'The frontage was narrow, and there abutted on it enormous warehouses, which would strike any casual observer as being in the possession of the lessee of the wharf, and so enforce the authority of the acting wharfinger of the latter. This effect was the more striking, that these warehouses not only adjoined but opened on the wharf, which allowed free ingress and egress to the occupants.' Mr Cole, who had created himself into a firm, got his wharfinger, one Maltby, to create *himself* into a firm likewise, and to call on the lessees of the adjoining warehouses, representing, as the agent of Cole Brothers, that the wharf which they had taken was insufficient for the accommodation of the goods lightered there, and stating their willingness to enter into an arrangement by which, after he had weighed the goods, they should store the same away, he receiving the landing-charges, and they the charges for rent. Nothing could seem more equitable than this proposal; it was quite in the usual course of business, and the lessees had accordingly no hesitation in giving their compliance. Maltby was delighted for the sake of his employers; but he had a parting request to make, a slight one, to which the lessees, after the spirit of accommodation they had shewn, would doubtless accede to. This was, that they would allow the goods thus stored to be seen and examined from time to time, as might be required, by the customers of Cole Brothers. "Oh, surely, nothing could be more reasonable."'

Conceive, then, these two sham-firms, in company with a third, which, unhappily, was real enough to be subsequently transported, become city capitalists, and undertaking 'transactions' at the rate of two million *per annum;* and only imagine how highly they must have been respected. That they should have imposed upon our poor literary selves and unbusiness-like readers, is like enough, but on Merchant Princes, Commercial Intelligences, nay, upon one of *the* Business Houses *par excellence* of the city of London, as though it had had a mere *littérateur*, or even a poet, at the head of it, and controlling its gigantic finances—how unaccountable! Imposed upon, too, to the extent of L.370,000! The subsequent proceedings were even more remarkable. One would have expected the house which was thus victimised to have been eager, on having its eyes opened, to expose the delusion. But no; the house had parted with a large proportion of these fictitious warrants to others, and remained silent. 'Why not expose them at once?' asked Mr Commissioner of the Court of Bankruptcy; 'in order that you might get out of it—in order that you might reduce the damage? You did reduce the damage, indeed, but at what (moral) cost?' A question not to be answered; or to be answered, as it was in these remarkable words: 'The magnitude of the sum, and regard for our position, compelled us to thus act.' There has been no small amount of comment on this feature of the transaction; but to all non-commercial men comment must appear quite unnecessary.

But after all, we may not have been really taking a sufficiently 'practical' view of these things. A person unacquainted with extensive business transactions must needs be unaware, we are told, of the cruel necessities—quite apart from anything like temptations—which underlie them in all directions, and render individual honourable action almost impossible. 'Custom'—in the shape of rather sharp practice—does, in truth, 'lie on them with a weight, heavy as frost and deep almost as life.' Commenced by the Vicious, and assented to by the Weak, it has long become difficult indeed for the Honourable to stand against a system, whose principle is but selfish expediency.

One of the most honourable and generous persons, in social life, whom we have ever known, a member of the House of Commons, too independent to be caught by any ministerial wile, was once guilty of the following (to us) most extraordinary conduct. He was a racing-man, and kept a 'Tout' to furnish him with early intelligence concerning 'great events' of the Turf. This emissary arrived one evening, while we were in our friend's company, and after a hint that we were 'safe parties' to be let into the secret—which, by the by, it now turns out we were not—proceeded to open his important budget. The sister to Take-the-blue-pig-by-the-ear, and first favourite for the approaching *Oaks*, had broken down in her gallop that afternoon, and would only have three legs to stand upon for weeks to come. Judge then our surprise, the next morning, when we heard the M.P. negotiating a bet for a very large amount against this very mare, with one of his chosen companions and familiar friends.

'Good Heavens!' cried we, the next time we were alone in his company, 'was that an example of your morality and plain-dealing?'

'My dear sir,' replied he, 'you don't understand turf practices. My friend would have done just the same to me, if he had had the chance. It is merely a question of early intelligence, and goes on precisely the same principle as that of speculating in the funds. Any honourable man—in your sense of the term—would be ruined upon the turf in half a year.'

It is something of this kind, no doubt, which makes Commercial Morality rather a different thing from the genuine article. And besides, there are, doubtless, honourable men in business, who yet do not get ruined in half a year. It will not be imagined, indeed, from these remarks of ours, that we have any intention of reflecting upon a vast class of our fellow-countrymen, who have probably done more by their sagacity and probity to raise this nation in the opinion of the world, than any other. But 'occurrences' such as we have been reverting to, are scarcely things that can occur in a commercial community which is really sound at heart; nay, the revelations consequent upon them have indeed abundantly proved that the said heart is somewhat rotten. We would only recommend a slightly less arrogant posture, to our practical business-men, for the present, and a more careful and honourable supervision for the future.

A minor but observable phenomenon in almost all these commercial frauds is this, that notwithstanding the gigantic gain of the spoilers, the vast treasure cast up by the great sea of speculation to these greedy wreckers, it seems to return again into the fathomless depths. More surprising still, what little does not return is spent upon whitewashing these whited sepulchres themselves, making them fairer and sleeker to the outward eye. Paul and Redpath—robbers of first-rate magnitude—seem to have spent the greatest part of their ill-gotten wealth in religious and commercial polish, in broadening their phylacteries, in seeming unto men to be above all things Respectable.

John Sadleir, again, never purchased one hour's pleasure with the proceeds of all his villanies: he clothed himself with business as with a garment, and never took it off except when he went to bed, if, indeed, he did then manage to get himself rid of it. Watts and Robson, on the other hand, recommend themselves to human nature at least in being jovial rogues, and generous enough, it must be confessed, with the money they had stolen. They made to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and seem to have been sincerely liked by those who had only seen the sunny side of them. These two, however—who, by the by, were also the most hardly dealt with—had attached themselves to the theatrical profession, and had scarcely any right to be called respectable swindlers, or nefarious business-men, at all.

THE SECRET.

Still, still river, flowing on
Through the level land, away, away;
Heeding not bright summers gone,
Nor longing in soft meadow nooks to stay;
Making no idle moan
By night or day;

Still, still river, in thy place
Meandering into the distant west
With might and calm and royal grace,
Of thy rare secret I would be possessed;
Teach me those quiet ways
In which thou wanderest.

T. A.

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JONES'S GREATNESS.

My friend Jones started in life with the intention of achieving Greatness, adhered steadily to that determination throughout, and at length, it is almost needless to say, was successful. Mankind, who flatter success even more than they hate it, are in the habit of assigning to the gainers of it a reputation for genius, talent, or shrewdness; whereas what is far more requisite (except in rare instances) to its attainment, is self-denial—that is to say, the subordination, from the very beginning, of all natural pursuits to the proposed end. This is easier with some than with others, of course; but it can be done by almost all. Who can doubt but that any human male creature, coming naked into the world, and living seventy years in it with his mind fixed on the acquisition of money, will die with at least his *plum!* Getting as largely as possible, but despising no gain however small; spending as sparely as he can; with eyes ever alive to the gleam of gold; with hands greedy to catch, tenacious to hold—such a man may have had, indeed, to sacrifice all that is best in this life; may have lived without love in the world, and died having made a friend of neither God nor Man; but he will have made (in compensation) his plum, or even his *ten* plums, his Million of Money. 'And a very pretty sum, sir,' as has been before observed, 'to begin the next world with, too.' Whether it is possible that such a one may have been a fool after all, is a question which, to some minds, would seem next kin to irreverential, considering the amount of money acquired; but he needs not certainly to be considered a wise man.

Similarly, although less easily, considerable distinction besides this one of mere wealth can be obtained in many walks, by diligent application and the concentration of all faculties to the one object. The inquiry to be made upon setting out, however, is but too apt to be delayed until it is too late—namely, 'Will it, after all, be worth my while?' I, for my part, have no experience of the matter to place at the disposal of the Public; but I behold Jones's Greatness, and that is sufficient for me.

Have you ever watched a persevering parrot climbing painfully up the outside of his gilded cage, never advancing one perpendicular inch but by a wearisome, tentative process of beak and claw; and at last, having reached the ring at the summit, have you seen him swaying himself backwards and forwards in a self-congratulatory manner, and yet not looking altogether comfortable in his mind, even then? Whether it is that, Alexander-like, he regrets that there is nothing more to conquer, that he can get no higher; or whether he would really feel safer if he were at the bottom again, which, as he well knows, he can never more regain except by the headforward method, I do not know; but the general expression of his features, in spite of his gorgeous attire and exalted position, is certainly not a happy one. And I cannot conceal from myself that his case finds something like a parallel in that of the Greatness of Jones.

In the next edition of *The Boyhood of Great Men*, that of my friend will doubtless be chronicled, and I do not intend to dull the edge of its interest by any anticipation. I will merely state, that as, on the one hand, he did not distinguish himself in athletic sports, on account of that early application to the pursuit of his greatness at which I have already hinted; so, on the other hand, he was not a notorious 'muff' or 'spoon.' Throughout his life, indeed, he has been a quiet, well-behaved person, almost necessarily debarred from the extravagances and follies of his contemporaries, and if remarkable at all, remarkable for his noiseless unobtrusiveness. What has been reported of him, therefore, since his distinguished elevation, is, as will be seen, the more extraordinary and unaccountable. He went to bed upon a certain night, a hard-working, deserving person in good repute; he awoke in the morning, and found himself a public character, and infamous.

Jones is a painter, and his last picture was announced by the Thunderer and all its Echoes as being a credit to any age and any country. It was Michael Angelesque, said some; it would have been so, said others, but for its decidedly Claudian character. It was the Picture of the year, and for all time; and if only the colours were durable, he might be certain that mankind would not willingly let it die—— *But,* the very next day, poor Jones had tears in his eyes on account of what was the whole talk of the studios, concerning his atrocious conduct to the model of his Iphigenia; and on the second morning it got into the newspapers, and came to the angry eyes of Mrs Jones. Moreover, it then appeared that he had not in reality painted any of the pictures which were attributed to him, but had kept a colour-mixer, of very great talents, at half-a-crown a week, to do them for him, who was bound over to that service, by a legal document, for a very long series of years. He had picked the poor fellow up in the humblest circumstances; observed, with a vulture eye, his extraordinary gifts; and from that moment had battened upon his unlucky brains in the above unprecedented manner.

Or my friend Jones, the subtle lawyer, but heretofore obscure, except among the profession, has just been appointed Lord Chief-justice of the Common Pleas. 'A fitting capital to a life-long pillar of legal devotion,' say the judicial organs, becoming almost poetical in their enthusiasm. The right man in the right place, as is admitted by all who were not expectant of the high office in question for themselves.

'But how sad it is,' says Rumour, gravely shaking its innumerable heads, 'to think that, in early life, this man should have stolen a horse!' It turns out, also, that there are two clients of his, formerly in affluent circumstances, and to whom he introduced himself, it seems, without the medium of an attorney, who are now beggars, sir—beggars. His persuasive talents were indeed at all times very remarkable. His clerk (who is poorly clad, and not well fed) is equally wicked, but not equally successful; and if either of them chose to tell tales, it *is* said, they could hang one another. Moreover, it is probable that the truth will, some day, out, since everybody knows they both—motion as of turning a liqueur glass bottom upwards—to excess.

Or my friend Jones is a divine, and attains a very wide celebrity for pulpit eloquence. His sermons, in their third extensive edition, combine the most fervid eloquence with the truest teaching; possess a rare and genuine vein of the most liberal charity, and exhibit an array of learning, modestly indicated in their foot-notes, which is an honour to the church which hails him as her son.

'The greater the pity, therefore,' sighs Universal Report, 'that the reverend gentleman should be unable to write except under the direct influence of opium.' Although that circumstance is, after all, of the less consequence, since it is alleged that he buys his discourses at an establishment in Cheapside, long famous for its possession of a certain theological writer, who, but that he prefers to sweep a crossing, and cannot be kept from drink, might be Archbishop of Canterbury. With such strict ultra-Anglican views, also, as Jones professes to have, so as to oppose himself even to the marriage of the priesthood, what a very queer story that seems to be about his *niece!* Having been himself, too, an only child, and consequently without brother or sister, the relationship does look a little ill chosen, certainly. The idea of his having had his gown taken away from him so lately as 1852, seems almost as strange as the reason for it—duelling. The report, however, that he killed his man, is inaccurate; he only *winged* the gallant captain.

Or my friend Jones is a physician of most meritorious character, who has done more towards the mitigation of pain, perhaps, than any man in his generation. A doer of numberless unknown acts of good, a beneficent apostle of healing, and an unadvertised Blessing to Mothers.

How unaccountable it is, then, that such a person should not appreciate the value of a moral character! It is more than hinted that, when he has a mind, Dr Jones will do almost as much harm as good, and is not always such a blessing to husbands as he is to mothers. He could not, clearly, have been thinking of his professional business when he (accidentally, of course) gave poor Sir Joseph Green Belladonna instead of Balm-tea. How such matters manage to get hushed up in the medical profession is very remarkable. He visits, however, good Lady Green as usual, who has forgiven him his little mistake in a truly Christian spirit. Being so generous, as some would have one believe, it seems inconsistent that the brown footman who shews you into his sanctum happens to be his father, who thereby prevents the bribes paid for admission into the popular physician's presence from going out of the family. His grandfather, who is still alive (though in pitiably indigent circumstances), would doubtless have had an appointment of a similar nature, but that he is unfortunately a man of colour, and was formerly a slave in Carolina.

Or my friend Jones is a comic actor of such intense humour, that he cannot appear upon the stage without one roar of laughter from boxes, pit, and gallery. Nor, indeed, for low broad farce is there a man to touch him upon the British stage.

And yet, do you know, the private peculiarity of poor Jones is melancholy! Deep-seated, continuous, and funereal gloom! He may die any moment with that disease of the heart he has, and is especially liable to such an accident when singing, which perilous performance he has (poor fellow) to go through every night of his life. Although a player by profession, he is by conviction a strict Calvinist. It is said he learned his most telling laugh of a donkey looking over a village-pond in Essex, and that he instantly killed the too talented quadruped with a pointed stick, lest it should ever give the idea to another person. It is also worthy of mention, that although we always see him as the grave-digger, his own impression is that he acts Hamlet, and solemn characters generally, better than any tragedian dead or alive.

Or, lastly, my friend Jones is an author of acknowledged genius, whose books have the healthiest of circulations from the most natural causes. 'The delightful pathos of his writings,' as you may read as you run in the daily press, 'is enriched by the highest religious principles;' while his touches of nature are such as to have brought tears, on more than one occasion, even into the eye of a publisher.

But, alas, what hypocrisy is so great as that of the writer of Fiction! It is but too well understood that Jones is at heart an atheist, and opposed to the celebration of the Sabbath. His private life, it is alleged, is of a character to make Nero blush, and Heliogabalus hide his imperial but less profligate head. With regard to his popularity, there is, some say, a sect in the city, who, despising all legitimate objects of veneration, have deified Jones, and worship him; although others assert that this is but an exaggerated account of a convivial club of which he is the founder. His great original talents are acknowledged, but it is curious, though perhaps an undesigned coincidence, that his productions are all built upon plots the property of an obscure French novelist of the last century; while his dialogues present a marked similarity to those of Richardson, Smollett, Fielding, Sterne, and several others. Although not much *à propos* this subject, it may be mentioned, as a note-worthy circumstance, that Jones is probably the only now living in this country who is afflicted with leprosy; on account of which misfortune he is oblig to perpetually wear gloves, and a velvet mask metal springs.

My poor friend Jones's Greatness having, in a wo so many drawbacks, I have never much envied Jo Whether I ever possessed the talents, virtues, denial, or what you will, to achieve his eminence, I desired it, is an open question, of which the wo takes one side, and I the other. At all events, content with my lot. I prefer to paint portraits ten shillings upwards: to pick up my guinea in courts when opportunity and an attorney offe preach to a congregation which has never yet requ me to publish my sermons: to practise physic out a brougham: to consider the second comic tryman a good part, and one which exhibits my sufficiently: or to write anonymously, as now never to wed my name with immortal title When *I* ride into the lists of Fame, like my

Jones, with visor up, the good Time will have arrived, which has been so long in coming, when Greatness ceases to have its Libels as well as its Privileges.

AN ENGLISHWOMAN OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.[*]

This is but a slight narrative by a superficial observer, and yet it is an engrossing book. Will the events of succeeding centuries, we wonder, ever throw into the background this great crisis of modern history? will the thrill with which we listen to any and every fresh account of its marvels, ever grow weaker? At all events, the seventy years that have passed away since that awful 'death-birth' of a nation, have done nothing towards effecting this. It still seems as if no amount of repetition could make this tale sound old in our ears. The most highly wrought novel would be tame in comparison with the plainest statement by *grisette* or countess, St Antoine workman or St Germain aristocrat, of what they saw or suffered, endured or inflicted, in those portentous days.

Mrs Elliott's narrative, drawn up at the desire of George III., and now published for the first time, is all the more acceptable because she comments little on the causes of the 'horrid French Revolution,' as she invariably calls it. Evidently we should not get much insight from her in that way; but her personal experience is very welcome. Some anachronisms there may be, some confusion as to specific dates and names; but, on the whole, there is strong internal evidence of authenticity, and, as we before said, abundant interest in the journal of this fair and frail, light-minded, but kind-hearted woman.[†]

Married when but a girl of fifteen to a man older than her own father, and in every way unsuited to her; gifted with a dangerous degree of beauty, and surrounded by admiration, the young wife's downward career began very early. When her journal opens, in 1789, we find that she is living in Paris, vainly endeavouring to use her influence over the Duke of Orleans, to detach him from the revolutionary party, and reconcile him to the court. She represents him as weak rather than wicked; a mere tool in the hands of men of stronger purpose; drifting, like many of his betters, towards an abyss which he never foresaw. She speaks of him as naturally gentle, good-natured, generous; accounts for all his faults by his head having been turned by the 'horrid Revolution,' and appears to have mourned his degradation more deeply than his death.

To us, who look back from the catastrophe over the chain of events leading up to it, it seems wonderful that Mrs Elliott should not have fled from Paris during the summer of 1792. Royalist as she was, she heard with horror and indignation of the incursion of sans culottism into the very Tuileries on the 20th of June; but still she lingered in the devoted city till the 10th of August. That morning, as she sat at her toilet, the cannonading broke in upon her, fearfully loud, for her house was near the palace. The terrible tidings soon reached her—St Antoine and St Marceau had risen, were pouring down upon the Tuileries—the royal family had fled for protection to the Assembly—the Swiss guards were falling fast at their posts, resolved not to desert them, though they were themselves deserted. Mrs Elliott would now have gladly moved to her house at Meudon, but the barriers were shut; no one must leave Paris that day! In the evening, her maid reminded her of a certain faithful ex-porter of hers, now occupying a small house and garden behind the Invalides, close to which, he has been heard to say, there is a breach in the wall, made by smugglers, and to be scrambled over without much difficulty. Accordingly, at nine o'clock, Mrs Elliott walks to the cottage, gets safely over the wall, crosses the plains of Vaugirard in the dark, fearing to look behind her, fancying footsteps following, and reaches her house at Meudon almost senseless, with bleeding feet, her shoes having been of white silk, and the road very stony.

There she remained, keeping as quiet as possible, till the dreadful 2d of September. That morning, a shabby-looking boy brought her a note from a friend, entreating her presence in Paris, where she might be of use to an unhappy person. Mrs Elliott at once responded to the appeal. She procured a passport for herself and servant, got into a cabriolet calculated to hold two, and went off quite alone. Arrived at the Barrière Vaugirard, the soldiers expressed their surprise that she should wish to enter Paris at such a time, and told her of the massacres then going on at the prisons, and of streets running blood; still the brave woman persisted in going on, bent on saving, though she knew not whom. Arrived at her friend's house, she found, to her surprise, that the endangered person was the Marquis de Chansenets, late governor of the Tuileries.

What we poor human beings can endure and live! This unfortunate man, left in the palace when the royal family fled, on the 10th of August, only too well known and unpopular by virtue of his office, escaped the rush of the mob by throwing himself out of a low window into the garden, which was already heaped with the bodies of the faithful Swiss. There he lay for hours among the dead and wounded, not daring to move. The weather was very hot, the bodies decomposed rapidly; but still the living lay quietly there! In the evening, one of the national guard, looking for some friend of his among the ghastly heap, found and recognised the Marquis de Chansenets, and lent him his coat, at the peril of his own life. Chansenets then made his escape by the Place du Carrousel; but exhausted by the sufferings of the day, he could go no further than the Rue de l'Echelle. A poor woman, supposing him to be a tired soldier, asked him in. To her he gave himself out as an Englishman, led by curiosity to the palace, and there ill used by the mob. Before the woman could give him the crust and drop of brandy for which he asked, her husband, a furious Jacobin, returned from his day's work of murdering the Swiss soldiers. She had just time to hide Chansenets behind a press, to stop her husband at the door, send him off under some pretext, and then she silently pushed her dangerous visitor out into the street. The next place he crawled to was the English ambassador's. There he saw the secretary, who was kind to him, and lent him clothes; but there was no shelter for him there, every one being prohibited, on pain of death, from harbouring any who had been with the king in the Tuileries. By this time it was late, and he knew not in the least in what direction to go. At length, he recollected having met an English lady at Mrs Elliott's, and to her quiet lodgings in the Rue de l'Ancre he betook himself, passing through by-streets as much as possible. The porter at the lodge asked his name. 'Monsieur Smith for Madame Meyler,' was the reply, and then Chansenets mounted the four flights of stairs, and frightened poor Madame Meyler not a little, for she had heard that he had been killed. In spite of the proclamation, neither this good woman nor her maid could bear the idea of turning out to perish a human being who had trusted them. They contrived to make the porter believe that he was gone away, and hid him for that night. But each following day matters grew still worse: the royal family were sent to the Temple—domiciliary visits began. The search was nominally for arms, but woe if any aristocrat be found in the house! Poor Madame Meyler and her maid had to wrap their protégé in a blanket, and to hide him in a sink, till the dreaded visits were paid. But on the morning of the 2d September, the proclamation spoke of a search more than ever severe, to be made at different hours of the night. It seemed impossible to shelter Chansenets any longer in the Rue de l'Ancre, and Madame Meyler wrote that appeal to Mrs Elliott's kindness which had brought her into Paris, to the surprise, as we have seen, of the very soldiers at the barrier.

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[*] Mrs Dalrymple Elliott's *Recollections of the French Revolution*. Bentley. 1859.

[†] Grace Dalrymple, the daughter of Hugh Dalrymple, a relative of the House of Stair, was born in Scotland about 1765. Her father was a distinguished barrister, her mother a woman of remarkable beauty, but early deserted by her husband. Her daughter, Grace, was sent to a French convent for education.

She had no particular friendship for the late governor of the Tuileries; possibly, indeed, she had a different feeling, for he had behaved with some apparent ingratitude to the Duke of Orleans; but his situation deeply affected her, and she at once resolved to do all in her power to save him. To get him out of Paris, seemed obviously the best plan; but it was still too early to venture out in an open cabriolet. As soon as it grew quite dark, they set out to the Barrier of Vaugirard, where Mrs Elliott shewed her passport, expecting to be at once allowed to pass; but no!—no egress that night, she was told, from any of the Paris barriers; and she was advised to go and get a bed as soon as possible, as at two o'clock the domiciliary visits were to begin, and no carriages would then be allowed in the streets. Where were they to go? the driver naturally asked, and poor Mrs Elliott did not well know what to say, fearing to go to her own house, her cook being a Jacobin, and fearing by her hesitation to excite the suspicion of the guard, who were less polite than in the morning. She fixed upon the Barrière de l'Enfer, with a faint hope of being allowed to pass thence to Meudon; but no!—no hope there either. 'Drive, then, to the Allée des Invalides,' said she, with a thought of her friend the ex-porter. When they got out of the cabriolet, Mrs Elliott saw with dismay Chansenets unable to stand, and supported by the driver. With great presence of mind, she flew into a pretended passion, and told the driver her servant was drunk. The man shrugged his sympathy, and drove off. The fugitives sat for two or three minutes at the foot of one of the trees, and the air reviving the unhappy Chansenets, he just contrived to stand. But where to go next? Turning up an avenue leading to her old servant's house, they saw troops at the further end, and patrols coming their way. Mrs Elliott burst into tears, and her companion entreated her to give him up to the first patrol, thus saving her own life at least. The very idea of such a thing, however, nerved her generous heart afresh. Not with the scaffold full in view could she have abandoned him or any one in a similar plight: she would try another way. Turning round, they crossed the Pont Neuf, and reached the Champs Elysées in safety; but when there, they were no better off. It was nearly eleven o'clock, and only soldiers still lingered in the streets. Mrs Elliott was close to her own house, but the dread of her Jacobin cook prevented her entering it. Chansenets, fainting with fatigue, again entreated her to give him up. Again she refused. She had undertaken to save him: she would save him, or else they would die together.

Their next scheme was to reach the Duke of Orleans's house at Monceaux, and there hide in the garden. To do this, it was necessary to pass Mrs Elliott's door. There sat the Jacobin cook! Fortunately, an unfinished building near afforded a temporary hiding-place to the miserable Chansenets, while his generous protectress went to her own house to see what could be done next.

Her servants were much alarmed at her appearance at so late an hour, but she devised a plausible story; and telling the dreaded cook that she was faint with hunger, and must positively have a roast fowl and salad, if it cost ten louis, she insisted that the woman should at once go out and buy it, hoping thus to get rid of her for a while, and having full confidence in the other servants. The cook made many objections; but being threatened with dismissal on the morrow unless she complied, she was actually leaving the room, when M. de Chansenets, scared out of all presence of mind by the sight of patrols coming down the street, knocked at the gate, and entered the room. All screamed aloud with amazement, and Mrs Elliott, pretending not to have seen him before, asked how he could think of coming to her house at such a time. He took the hint, devised a rather improbable story in reply, was flown at by the Jacobin cook as a 'nasty aristocrat,' and reproached for the danger to which he was exposing them all. However, despite her politics, and the reward offered for Chansenets, she shewed no inclination to denounce him, and set off in quest of the roast fowl, while he remained behind, promising to go off directly. But still the dilemma seemed hopeless. To leave the house was impossible, for the domiciliary visits had begun; the cook was gone, indeed, but might return at any moment; and M. de Chansenets was in a fearful state of exhaustion. And now the brave Mrs Elliott shall tell her own story.

'My porter thought M. de Chansenets might be hid between the mattresses of my bed, which were very large, and in an alcove. We accordingly pulled two of the mattresses out further than the others, and made a space next the wall, and put him in. When he was there, we found that the bed looked tumbled, and, of course, suspicious. I then decided upon getting into bed myself, which prevented any appearance of a person being hid. I had all my curtains festooned up, my chandeliers and candelabra lighted. My cook soon came home, and I made her sit by my bedside the rest of the night. She abused M. de Chansenets, said that he was sure to be guillotined, and hoped I had turned him out directly. My own attendant now came in. She was a good woman, and as faithful as possible; yet, as she had not been there when Chansenets was hid, I thought that it was better not to tell her anything about it till after the domiciliary visit had been made. I had some warm negus by my bedside, and when my maid and the cook went out to see what was going on, I could just get at Chansenets to give him a tea-spoonful of it. Indeed, I was frightened to death, for I heard him breathe hard, and thought that he was dying, and I expected every minute that my cook would hear him. In short, I passed a most miserable night, surrounded by my servants, and almost in fits myself at the horrid visit I was going to receive. I trembled so much that [illegible] could hardly stop in bed, and the unfortunate man who was the cause of my misery, I thought, perhaps lay dead near me, for I could not hear him breathe [illegible] times.

'At a quarter before four o'clock, my cook hurried into my room, telling me that the municipal officers were coming in. No pen or words can give [illegible] smallest idea of my feelings at that moment. I [illegible] that I was lost; but a very deep groan from my companion roused me in a moment; and God inspired me with more courage than I had ever felt in my [illegible] Had the guards come into my room at that moment, I might have lost both myself and Chansenets; [illegible] was determined to brave every danger, and to [illegible] myself up to them. Fortunately, they visited [illegible] part of my house before they came into my room, and pulled my maid's bed and all the servants' beds to pieces, running their bayonets into the mattresses and feather-beds, swearing that they would not leave the house till they had found Chansenets. My maid and my cook, not knowing that he was in the house, were very bold, and feared nothing; but the men said that he was seen to go into the house, and not go out.

'This long search gave me time to cool. When the ruffians burst with violence and horrid imprecations into my room, I was perfectly calm, full of presence of mind, and indeed inspired with a courage equal to anything earthly. The candles were all a-light; day was breaking, and my room looked more like a ball-room, than a scene of the horrors that were passing. They came all up to my bed, and asked me to get up. One of them, however, less hard than the others, said that there was no occasion to take me out of bed, as I could not dress before so many men. They were above forty. I said directly that I would get up with pleasure, if they required me to do so, but that I had passed a very cruel night. I had expected them, I said, at an earlier hour, and then had hoped to pass the rest of the night in quiet. I added, that I was sure they must be much fatigued, and proposed wine or liqueurs, or cold pie to them.

'Some of the head men were delighted with me, said nobody they had seen the whole night had been half so civil; that they were sorry they had not come sooner, in order that I might have had a good night when they were gone. They would not now make me get up, but were obliged to go on with their visit, and must search everywhere in my bed and under my bed. They, however, only felt the top of my bed and at its feet, and then under the bed. They also undid all the sofa-cushions, both in my room and in my boudoir and drawing-room, looked in my bathing-room, and, in short, were an hour in and out of my room. I expected every moment that they would again search the bed, as some of them grumbled, and said that I should get up, and that they had information of Chansenets being in my house. I said that they knew my cook, and might ask her in what manner I had received him when he came, and that I made him leave the house directly. She assured them of the truth of this, and that she was certain that I would not have harboured so great a foe of the Duke of Orleans. They said we should have given him up to justice. I replied, though I disliked him, yet I did not like to denounce anybody. They declared that I was then a bad *citoyenne*, and wished to know where they could find him. I told him that he said he was going home. They replied that they did not believe he would do that; but that if he was in Paris, they would find him in twenty-four hours. They then came back to my bed, and one of them sat down on it.

'It may easily be supposed in what a state of alarm poor Chansenets was during this long visit. I had heard nothing of him, had not even heard him breathe. At length the monsters advised me to take some rest, and wished me good-night. They stayed some time longer in my house, during which I was afraid of moving. At last I heard the gates shut, and my servants came in and told me that they were all gone. I went into violent hysterics. When I recovered a little, I desired my cook and other servants to leave the room, and go to bed, saying that I would take something, and go to rest myself. I directed my maid to bolt my room-door, and then I disclosed to her what I had done, and who was in the bed. She screamed with dread when she heard it, and said that she never could have gone through the visit, had she known it.

'We now got our prisoner out of the bed with great difficulty, for when he heard the guards come into the room, he had tried to keep in his breath as much as possible, and having been so smothered, he was as wet as if he had been in a bath, and speechless. We laid him on the ground, opened the windows, and my maid made him drink a large glass of brandy. At last he came to himself, was full of gratitude to me, had been both frightened and surprised at my courage when the men were in the room, and the more so when I offered to get out of bed.'

No wonder that, after this terrible tension of all her energies, Mrs Elliott should herself feel very ill. A bed was made up in her boudoir for her unfortunate guest, and the faithful maid locked him in. The following day the Duke of Orleans paid a visit to Mrs Elliott, who felt inclined to trust him with her secret, but would not take so important a step without consulting Chansenets, who well knew himself to be obnoxious to the duke. He, however, was strong in the conviction that he could clear himself of all charge of ingratitude, and thought that his best chance of deliverance would be to throw himself upon the duke's compassion. Accordingly, when the latter paid his visit on the morrow on the way to the Convention, Mrs Elliott startled him by disclosing the truth. He heard it with dismay, as probably involving her safety, but was unable to devise any means of getting Chansenets removed. Mrs Elliott, therefore, had to conceal him till the barriers were opened, when she took him to her house at Meudon, and finally, had the satisfaction of seeing him set off in a mail-cart, the driver of which had agreed with the duke to take Chansenets to Boulogne, from whence he got safely into England.

Mrs Elliott's horror of the duke's conduct in voting for the death of his king and near relative was intense, nor did she shrink from openly expressing it to him. Her sufferings were extreme; and their last interview was a very painful one. He found himself unable to procure her a passport, and could but advise her not to talk of England at that time, but to bear her misfortunes like other people, and to keep very quiet. Soon afterwards, she was herself arrested; and after examinations and re-examinations, and a short space of liberty, she was sent to the prison of St Pelagie in the May of 1793. She did not stay there long; but she cannot say exactly how long, the change of name of the months having, she said, so perplexed her as to the date of events. At St Pelagie she made the acquaintance of the wretched Dubarry, and describes her as a very good-natured creature, telling anecdotes of Louis XV. and his court by the hour together. It is well known that this in every way pitiable woman went to the scaffold in an agony of abject terror. Mrs Elliott believes that this was not without good effect upon the public mind. The mob had been accustomed to a calm and lofty bearing on the part of the victims, but these wild shrieks and frantic, impotent struggles horrified and alarmed.

The next prison to which Mrs Elliott was doomed was that of the Recollets at Versailles. Here her hardships were great indeed; but suffering seems to have brought out all the noble and tender feelings of her nature. Shut up with an old Dr Gun, an English physician and a *philosophe*, she tended him as a daughter might have done, begging him, however, not to discuss his favourite themes with her, nor disturb the faith which made her strong, while he was overwhelmed with despair. He was released from confinement before her, but wept to leave her behind. It is painful to read of the privations to which she and her companions in misery were subjected; but it is a ray of light to find that when she was ill, the others were all kindness, would even deprive themselves of the little water they could spare for her use, and that common misfortune had made them all 'sincere, nay, romantic friends, always ready to die for one another.'

Mrs Elliott's imprisonment was latterly shared with Madame Beauharnais, afterwards the Empress Josephine, and Madame de Fontenai, afterwards Madame Tallien. All three were ordered for execution, and had undergone the preparatory cutting of their hair on the very day that Robespierre's fall ended the Terror. Mrs Elliott returned to England for several years, but finally settled in France: at the restoration of the Bourbons, had the satisfaction of seeing the Marquis de Chansenets, whose life she had so bravely saved, reinstated as governor of the Tuileries; and died before the revolution of 1830.

WATER.

THERE is no material substance whose transformations are more marvellous, and whose relations are more complex and extensive, than those of water. You take in your hand a hailstone, and it rapidly changes into a transparent fluid, which gradually vanishes, only to reappear, during frosty weather, in dew-drops upon your window, where it resumes, in delicate ramifications, its former crystalline solidity. You place another under a bell-glass with thrice its weight of lime, and it soon melts and disappears, leaving behind it four parts, instead of three, of perfectly dry earth. You subject an opal to chemical analysis, and find it but a combination of flint and water, the latter being to the former as one to nine. Of the alum, the carbonate of soda, and the soap which you purchase of your grocer, the first contains forty-five, the second, sixty-four, and the third, from seventy to seventy-three and a half parts of solidified water. The clay-field which you plough contains a ton of water to every three tons of soil; nay, the very air which you inhale in ordinary weather holds diffused throughout every cubic foot of its bulk fully five grains of rarefied water, which no more wets the air than the solidified water wets the lime or the alum in which it is absorbed.

Profoundly wonderful, too, is the solvent power of water on solids and gases. Few of our readers, we are sure, would be inclined to think the glass they drink from soluble; yet the stained glass-windows of Westminster Abbey have all been honey-combed, and in many places nearly eaten through by the rain; and Lavoisier found that the glass retorts which he employed in distilling water from its constituent gases lost much of their weight, while that of the water was correspondingly increased by an impregnation of the elemental flint and alkali of the glass. Nor is granite itself exempt from the mastery of this marvellous menstruum. An object dipped in the silicious waters thrown up by the hot springs of Iceland from the depths of the plutonic strata, becomes coated with a flinty deposit identical with the silicate of glass. Nay, there are some acids which are actually soluble in the water contained in their own crystals. If you separate the thirty-six parts of dry salt from the sixty-four parts of water which combine, as we have seen, to form carbonate of soda, you may alternately solidify the water in the salt, and liquefy the salt in the water, according as you mix the ingredients cold or mix them warm. But lime, which, as we have also seen, can solidify a third of its weight of water, requires for its own solution no less than six hundred and fifty-six thousandth parts of the watery menstruum; while chalk, which is the carbonate of lime, is not soluble in water at all, and only becomes so when converted into a bicarbonate by the infusion of a little additional acid.

As regards gases, again, a hundred measures of water will, at an ordinary temperature and pressure, absorb a measure and a half of nitrogen, and nearly four measures of oxygen; while of the gases which arise from the decomposition of animal and vegetable matters, the same quantity will dissolve, of carburetted hydrogen, or common coal-gas, twelve measures and a half; of sulphuretted hydrogen, or drain-gas, and carbonic acid gas respectively, a hundred measures, or its own bulk; and of ammonia—the gas exhaled by spirits of hartshorn—no less than six hundred and seventy measures. To this absorptive power of water is owing the frequent contamination of London water by the coal-gas, which, leaking from the mains into the soil, is drawn into the service-pipes, sometimes to such an extent as to ignite at the water-taps.

We have hitherto treated of water in its relation to inorganic solids and gases: it is also, during life, a large constituent of organic bodies, whether animal or vegetable, and a powerful solvent of them after death. If a beefsteak be strongly pressed between two sheets of blotting-paper, it will yield nearly four-fifths of its own weight of water; while the experiments of Berzelius and Dalton prove that of the human frame, not excepting the bones, one-fourth only is solid matter, the rest being water. 'If a man, therefore,' says the former, in his *Lehrbuch der Chimie*, 'whose weight is ten stones, were squeezed flat under a hydraulic-press, seven stones and a half of water would be expressed, and only two stones of a dry residue, composed chiefly of carbon and nitrogen, would remain. The living organism,' he continues, 'is thus to be regarded as a solid mass diffused in water.' And Dalton found, by experiments on his own person, that five-sixths of the food taken day by day to repair the human fabric is also water. Of potatoes, again, no less than seventy-five per cent. is water, and of turnips, at least ninety—a fact which, as has been remarked, 'explains the small inclination of turnip-fed cattle and sheep for drink.'

The influence of water on the dead organism [illegible] worthy of a far more extended notice than we can [illegible] present bestow upon it. We shall only here remark that there are three changes—in all of which water [illegible] the indispensable agent—through which organised bodies pass in their gradual relapse to the inorganic condition—namely, fermentation, putrefaction, and decay. 'In fermentation,'* we are told, 'the molecules of a body are merely transposed and recombined in simpler groups; in decay, oxygen is absorbed precisely as in combustion.' Liebig, indeed, calls decay *slow combustion*. Now, an aqueous solution of fermenting organic matter, when the latter [illegible] diffused through the water in the proportion [illegible] from eight to ten grains to the gallon, so acts [illegible] the blood, the muscles, and all the more [illegible] able organs and tissues of the body, that the [illegible] of the patient shrinks to the condition of a [illegible] and is found to contain, after death, 'only fat, [illegible] dons, bones, and a few other substances [illegible] putrefying in the ordinary conditions of the body.'* But it is to be remarked that the solvent power of water on organic matter, and the fermentability of the diluted organic matter itself, depend entirely on the temperature. At a temperature of 30° Fahrenheit, neither solution nor fermentation takes place; at 40° Fahrenheit, solution proceeds at the rate of a grain or two per gallon in the twelve hours, but without any appreciable fermentation; at 60° Fahrenheit, the solvent power is greatly increased, and the fermentation accelerated; at 67° Fahrenheit, the solution has reached a state of putrescence, and is calculated to produce in the animal economy that series of remarkable changes which we have noticed above. Water thus plays a double part in the process we have been describing: as a solvent, it permits free action to that chemical movement or transposition of the organic molecules which is necessary to fermentation; as a conductor of oxygen, it yields the element essential to complete decay. It ceases to be noxious, however, as soon as fermentation abates, whether this depends, as in water old in tank, on the completion of the elemental transposition, or on the addition of a substance, such as alcohol, or of a force, such as boiling water, capable of arresting the process.

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* 'Fermentation takes the name of putrefaction [illegible] of the gaseous resultants evolved have a disagreeable [illegible]

Turning, now, from the consideration of water as an indispensable administrant to the final predominance of chemical over vital forces, to that of its properties and functions as it operates in producing the vital transformations themselves, we find in the case of plants, as observed by Lindley in the *Ficus elastica*, the water rushing upwards through their stipules like a swift stream, bearing along with it in solution the various saline and organic matters necessary for their nutrition. 'A pailful of water, suitably impregnated with salts, is speedily sucked up by the root of a growing tree immersed in it; the salts are assimilated, as also is part of the water, the remainder being evaporated by the leaves.' In France, in this way, timber is not only hardened, but even stained, while living, of divers brilliant hues. On the important subject of evaporation, much interesting light has been lately thrown by Mr Lawes of Rothampstead in his 'Experimental Investigations on the Amount of Water given off by Plants during their Growth,' published in the fifth volume of the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society of London*. From these experiments, it appears that, taking the period of the growth of a wheat-plant at a hundred and seventy-two days, the ultimate weight of the mature plant at a hundred grains, and its mean weight at fifty grains, its mean daily transpiration is actually greater than its own mean weight, the evaporation of the plant, during the full period of growth, having been found to average about a hundred thousand grains of water! In like manner, it has been ascertained that the sunflower gives off daily a pint and a quarter of water, and a cabbage nearly as much—facts which, as has been well remarked, fully 'justify us in attributing to living plants a pumping-power far more rapid and considerable than they have heretofore been supposed to possess.'

What has been said of the sap of plants, applies with equal force to the blood of animals. We have already had occasion to notice the experiments of Dalton on the living subject. A gallon and a half of circulating water, holding in suspension or solution the materials of which the body is built up, gives warmth, suppleness, and nutriment to every fibre of the frame, accomplishes the vital transformations, and prepares the effete residua for extrusion through appropriate channels. Of ninety-one ounces of solid and fluid aliment taken daily during the progress of his experiments, Dalton found that, while forty-eight and a half were excreted in the fluid form, and thirty-seven and a half in the shape of vapour from the lungs and skin, five ounces only were ejected in the comparatively solid form; while, even of these, three ounces and three-quarters were water, and a quarter of an ounce soluble in water, leaving only one ounce as the 'total daily *insoluble* ejectum of an adult man.'

If, still pursuing our chain of illustration, we finally consider the series of stupendous changes which have not improperly been called the life of the material world itself, we shall also find how conspicuous is the part which water plays in *them*. Upon the great tidal ocean, with its mighty currents, arctic and equatorial, constantly intermingling the concentrated brine of the tropics with the cooler and fresher waters of the poles, and with its vast evaporating surface of nearly one hundred and fifty millions of square miles, rests another mighty sea, having also its tides and currents —the liquid air. Where these two seas meet, they interfuse. For 2 per cent. by measure of air absorbed by the former, the latter holds in suspension 1 per cent. by weight, or nearly one million cubic miles of water, expanded—as each cubic foot of air contains at ordinary temperature rather more than five grains of water—to nearly eighty thousand times its fluid bulk. This fresh-water ocean steams up from the salt-water ocean at the rate of about sixteen tons per acre per day; and its mean bulk remaining unchanged, the supply of water by evaporation from below must necessarily equal its withdrawal by concentration from above.

Let us now attend to the process by which the distillation, transport, and condensation of this ambient vapour is effected. 'The air,' says a distinguished writer, to whom we have been already indebted for many curious facts in connection with our subject, 'expands so rapidly in ascending, that at three miles high, each cubic foot occupies the space of two; and this expansion increases its capacity for heat, of which it can absorb and render latent an extra degree of Fahrenheit for every 350 feet of elevation, or fourteen degrees and a half per mile. Such is the amount of heat stolen by air, as it ascends, from intermingled vapour; which, along with its heat, loses a corresponding proportion of its elasticity; whose reduction, again, brings about an equivalent diminution in the amount of cohesive force counterpoised; so that, at every successive elevation, a number of aqueous molecules, previously held apart as steam, collapse into visible vapour.' Thus, the six and a quarter grains of vapour held in suspension by each foot of fully saturated air at 60 degrees Fahrenheit, dwindle to three grains and a half at 40 degrees; and to two and a quarter at 32 degrees; the difference being the quantity that collapses in the process of ascending. This collapsed mist, however, would fall directly back into the ocean in a continuous drizzle, but for a very curious and beautiful provision of nature. When examined through a microscope, the clouds are found to consist of a congeries of little bubbles, resembling soap-bubbles (Saussure mentions his having once been caught in an Alpine fog in which these bubbles floated past him as large as peas), which, drifting along under the influence of the wind, finally collapse into compact drops, to be drawn down, by the earth's attraction, in showers to the ground, whence, after having discharged their important functions, they are again raised into the fresh-water ocean overhead. But true to its character as a vehicle, water not only carries up with it, in its evaporation, those more volatile particles of organic matter with which the earth and ocean teem, and which furnish subsistence to myriads of atmospheric animalculæ and fungi, but brings down with it in its descent millions of tons of life-sustaining matter, to repair the abrasion and decay of the terrestrial organism.

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* The poisonous properties of putrescent water seem to be nearly, if not altogether identical with those of the singular poison known to chemists as *sausage-poison*, for an extremely interesting account of which see Liebig's *Chemistry in its Application to Agriculture and Physiology*, English translation, pp. 383 *et seq.*

THE HEAD OF MY PROFESSION.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS born in the city of Bath, in the beginning of the present century. My earliest recollections of the hot-water capital are recollections of an era of prosperity, which, though then approaching its decline, was yet vigorous and boastful. At the period of my childhood, Bath was the winter focus of fashion, and to fashion and fashionable people it was devoted more thoroughly, perhaps, than any other city or town in the realm. Nothing that could by any possibility offend the visitors was allowed to exist; while every attraction, whatever its moral aspect, which had charms to lure them thither, was unreservedly displayed. I distinctly remember that while gaming-houses and worse places were encouraged, it was a high crime and misdemeanour for a little urchin to trundle a hoop on the pavement, lest he should damage the farthingale of some lady of quality; and school-boys were lugged off to prison in the town-hall for playing at 'cherry' in Orange Grove, to the supposed disturbance of the rheumatic tabbies. In those days, there were no hireable cabs, carriages, or omnibuses; and the only available locomotives were the sedan-chairs, for which there were regular stands at various places throughout the city, the principal ones being those near the Pump-room, and in front of the Assembly-rooms. The chairmen were a peculiar race, long since passed away—stout, brawny, broad-shouldered fellows, clad in light-blue frock surtouts, plush breeches, white stockings, and shoes with broad shining buckles. Originally, they had worn cocked-hats; but these, in my boyhood, began to give place to the customary cylinder, and disappeared altogether in the first years of my apprenticeship. These chairmen were the tyrants of the foot-pavements, along which they ambled at a six-mile-an-hour pace, ruthlessly sweeping into the kennel all who were not sufficiently active in getting out of their way. The walls of the old Abbey at that day bristled with chimneys and chimney-pots; close files of shops, chiefly occupied by small traders, clung like barnacles all round the surface of the ancient structure, save at the grand western entrance flanking the Pump-room; and a thriving trade was done in them, because here was one nucleus of the fashionable throng. Orange Grove then *was* a grove, crowded with ancient elms fungous with age. The Parades, North and South, were the Corso of worn-out roués and courtly convalescents, who promenaded them in wheel-chairs within the shadow of the New Assembly-rooms, and at an easy distance from the restoring waters. Dull, dreamy, and voiceless in summer-time, no sooner were the chills of autumn felt, than Bath was rapidly converted into a huge caravansary. Strange faces and new equipages flocked in by hundreds daily. Everybody then began to let lodgings, from the hucksters in the by-streets, to the speculators in the Circus and the Royal Crescent, and the price of apartments rose suddenly from shillings to pounds. Ten guineas a week was nothing for a tradesman's upper floors, which became the habitat of the landed gentry, whose retinue of servants had to take post in the tradesman's kitchen, along with his family, and to stow themselves at night in cupboard, closet, or garret, wherever a shake-down could be extemporised.

All those vices which were fashionable, winked at by the sober citizens, who made a profit out of them, walked the streets at noonday, if not without notice, without rebuke. Scenes which were common to all eyes at Bath during the era of the Napoleonic wars, could not now be described in these columns, because the present generation of readers would not tolerate the description. Among the least obvious of the vices which fashion had made popular was that of gambling: the gentry gamed in their houses nightly, without pretermitting the Sunday; gaming establishments flourished in all parts of the town; some select, and only accessible to the subscribers; others common to all who could assume the appearance of gentlemen. Of all the modes of gambling, perhaps billiards was most esteemed. The game had been pronounced healthful by a distinguished member of the faculty, and a rage sprang up for it, which prevailed for years. What the nobility and gentry delighted in, the middle classes and the lower classes would of course feel a longing for; and as a result, there were billiard establishments open to all ranks, from the subscription-tables at the Upper Rooms, where the members played for thousands, down to the rickety board of Old Spraggs in Union Passage, where the balls trundled over a field of green baize into pockets as wide as a church-door, and the apprentice-boys of the town gambled for twopences.

At ten years of age my uncle sent me to school at Old Carpenter's in George Street, one of the most vigorous floggers of the day, who, aware of his strength of arm, would considerately allow a culprit to indue an extra jacket, or even two, if he could borrow them, before submitting to punishment. Here I made the acquaintance of Ned B——, who soon became my bosom-friend, and through him it was that I became a billiard-player. Ned's father was the proprietor of a large billiard establishment in Milson Street, where, in several rooms built over the garden in the rear of the house, billiards were played during the season at all hours of the day and night. One or other of these tables was generally unoccupied, and at Ned's command. Here he taught me the game, for which I immediately conceived a passion, and practised it without intermission at every possible opportunity. It is a fact that in my eleventh year I sometimes played for seven hours a day, without absenting myself from school, without fatigue, and without surfeit. Ned's father had no objectio to our practice, as it was his object to make a finishe player of his son. The boy, however, was nea sighted, and I soon outstripped him in knowledge the game. Sometimes, Mr B—— would watch play, and give us instruction, which I was but apt in receiving. This state of things continued un I was fourteen years of age, by which time I cou beat, and had beaten, every amateur player th frequented the rooms—not unfrequently to the con siderable profit of the proprietor, who was alway ready to back my play.

At fourteen, my uncle bound me as outdo apprentice to Mr C—— in George Street. I h now but a little time in the evening for billi At first, I did not care for this, thinking I had enough of it; but after an interval of a few mon the old passion for the game returned stronger ever. I had recourse to my old schoolfellow o more; but now there was an objection to my app ance at the subscription-rooms, his father not wi his subscribers to identify me as Mr C——'s app tice. In consequence, it was only by stealth rare occasions that we could resume our 'pla this dilemma, I was driven to the cheaper ta to the public. There was one in the Borough Walls, open to all the world, and which, being opposite to the Blue School, and near the theatre, was much frequented during theatrical hours by the servants of the gentry occupying the boxes. I soon discovered that this place was the very sink of vice and low blackguardism; that the most infamous transactions were carried on there by means of a gang of gambling Jews, who plundered the unwary at dice and hazard; that, in a word, besides being a billiard-room, it was a perfect gambling hell—and yet I could not keep away. The best players I had yet seen frequented this table, and among them were some of the most consummate blackguards in existence. It was but rarely, however, that I met my match amongst them, and as I improved constantly, in process of time I could beat them all.

I should have been speedily and irredeemably ruined by the infamous society of this place, had it not been that, at about the age of sixteen, I conceived a violent passion for music, and began learning the piano, and studying counterpoint under a little humpbacked professor of the name of Albin, who taught me at a shilling a lesson. But for the music, I should certainly have thrown up my trade and turned gambler long ere I was out of my time. As it was, the music and the billiards divided my leisure between them; now one, now the other being in the ascendant. Perhaps the music would ultimately have weaned me from the billiard-table—for I rapidly acquired considerable skill, and could rattle off sets of quadrilles tastily enough in my second year—but about this time the *science* of billiards began to be talked of, and the practice of the game to assume some new phases. Every mouth was full of the praises of Jack Carr, who had invented the side-twist, and made other discoveries tending to the demonstration of phenomena hitherto unrecognised in the motion of globular bodies. All the billiard-world went mad on the new discoveries, and it was not likely that I should be unaffected by the current mania. Ned B—— first indoctrinated me in the new invention, and it was at his father's house I first saw Carr at play. I found him an adept at every artifice in the game, and astonishingly skilful in the use of his own invention, to which, nevertheless, I was not disposed to accord the value he claimed for it. I noticed that he was often beaten by players whom I had beaten frequently myself; and I noticed, too, that when thus beaten, it was invariably through reliance on his new-invented stroke. There was no difficulty in the use of this invention, even to a stranger, as the player who once understood the new principle could master it easily in a few hours' practice. In fact, what I then suspected, has since been abundantly proved: the side-twist is of little real use to a good player, as it adds but little to his real strength, and is not at all comparable to the capacity of making a good winning hazard—a faculty, by the way, which Carr did not possess in any extraordinary degree. About the same time, some one else, paraphrasing Carr's invention, discovered the top-twist, by which a still more eccentric motion is imparted to a ball. Both these discoveries, however, are rather curiosities of the players' art, than valuable additions to it, and as such they should be regarded; though there are, doubtless, certain situations in which they may be used with advantage. I was not long in mastering both these *tours de force*, and could call them into action when requisite.

One night, while I was playing a match with a footman in the Borough Walls' den, a young Irishman entered the room, and stood looking on. He was buttoned to the chin in a seedy coat, and trod in a pair of new hob-nailed highlows. The room was crowded; and some of the insolent wags of the place began exercising their wit at the expense of the new-comer. He bore it good-humouredly enough, answering only with a ready joke and a rather smart retort, until one of the blackguards, presuming on his quietness, shouldered a cue, and, walking backwards, brought the but-end in his face. The next moment, the aggressor was sprawling on the floor, and the Irish boy in a fighting attitude, ready for whosoever should present himself. The fallen man rose and rushed to the encounter, but in two minutes, had had enough of it, leaving the Irishman triumphant.

The visitor shewed the best possible temper, apologised to the company for the interruption his presence had occasioned, and begged that the play might be resumed; and in a few minutes, such order as was usual was restored. It appeared afterwards that Pat Meagher—so was the stranger called—had been a marker in Dublin; that he had landed at Liverpool without a penny, a fortnight before, and had tramped down to Bath, supporting himself with his cue on the route. He soon proved himself an admirable player, beating me at our first encounters, though I was able to return the compliment, after becoming acquainted with his tactics. He had the peculiar faculty of bringing his ball to a dead stop, after striking another, at whatever distance—a feat often of much value, and which I never saw accomplished so surely by any other man. He played but a few nights at the den, for he had the sense to see that if he became notorious there, his chance among the upper circles was lost. A few months after his arrival, I saw him, habited like an officer in undress, playing with a Right Honourable at B——'s subscription-tables. Here he gained a certain notoriety, and no inconsiderable cash. It being an understood thing that he would play any amateur for any amount, B——, without my knowledge, matched me against him for a contest of twenty-one games. I could not refuse to play the match; and it came off on Christmas-eve, in the presence of over a hundred spectators. At the end of the nineteenth game, I was the winner of eleven, and of a large amount of money which changed hands on the occasion, though I neither had nor coveted any of it.

I fell into disgrace at home by playing this match. The rumour of my exploit was bruited abroad, and reached the ears of my uncle, who was violently angry, as also was, or pretended to be, my master; and they talked of punishing me by imprisonment for playing at unlawful games, in violation of the terms of my indenture. I was compelled to give a solemn promise not to enter a billiard-room during the remainder of my apprenticeship, which had still a year to run. I kept my promise faithfully, consoling myself with my pianoforte, on which I strummed away till midnight. When my term drew to a close, my uncle, who feared I should turn gambler if I remained in Bath, wrote to his brother in Dover, who, carrying on the same business to which I had served my time, consented to receive me as an assistant. I was not unwilling to see the world; and accepted the situation offered.

I went down by the Dover coach in April 1824 to my new appointment. I found my relative an agreeable old fellow, already prejudiced in my favour, from a liking he had conceived for me in my childhood, during a visit to Bath, and not at all disposed to restrict my pleasures. He hired a pianoforte from Bachelor's, borrowed piles of music, and was never weary of my performances, which he enjoyed to perfection under a cloud of tobacco-smoke. Dover was at that time all life and gaiety. The Duke of Clarence's sons by Mrs Jordan ruled the roast at the garrison, and led the fashion in the town and neighbourhood. Routes, balls, fêtes, and dancing-parties followed each other nightly. Quadrilles were the rage, and, as a consequence, I soon became sought after as pianist, and had engagements four or five deep constantly on hand. I was paid handsomely for my services, and ate ices, quaffed champagne, and revelled in gastronomic luxuries. I relished my new position amazingly; I saw the best company; had the honour of playing to the blood-royal, and, what I relished more, to the beautiful daughters of Supervisor W——, the sight of whose bewitching faces sometimes set my fingers blundering, and my brain a wool-gathering.

As the summer drew on, this kind of occupation relaxed, and then ceased altogether, and my way of life settled down into a rather dull routine. The summer passed, and the autumn too, and November came in with its fogs and storms. I found a new pleasure in the roar of the huge breakers, and the dash of the sounding surge on the pebbly beach, under the castle cliff, which was then a dreary, weird-looking spot, very unlike what it is now. It was my habit to walk out of an evening through the darkness, and take post on the old stakes of the jetty, to enjoy in solitude the din, whirl, uproar, and fury of the tempest. One evening, about seven o'clock, as I was passing the end of Snargate Street towards the castle cliff, I heard a gentle clicking sound, which thrilled through me from head to foot like an electric shock—it was the soft, crepitating kiss of billiard balls. Here was a discovery! I had not known that there was a table in the town. I felt my right hand grasping the cue, and the fingers of my left forming a bridge, as if by some magnetic influence. I looked round in all directions for the entrance. A dim lamp hung over a side-passage; and a few paces down, there was an open door and a staircase, lighted by the merest blink from above. I stole softly up the stairs, and came at the first landing on a door, with a glass panel, but partly curtained within. I peeped in, and saw two officers at play at a small table, and a company of gentlemen seated round. I had been at work all day, and had my apron rolled round my waist. I knew it would not do to enter in such a garb. I ran home and washed, indued my best suit, and in twenty minutes had returned and entered the room.

No one noticed my intrusion, so I took a seat and watched the game. One of the players I recognised as a garrison-officer who had often danced to my music, and it is probable that he recognised me. He won the game, and his adversary declined to play any more, on the plea that he had no chance with him. The victor then challenged the room; and as no one accepted the challenge, I rose and offered to play him myself. He eyed me from head to foot rather superciliously, and with a kind of haughty condescension, rolling the balls as he spoke, told me to lead off. Annoyed at his pomposity, I allowed him but a single stroke, and then carelessly made the game off the balls. He was pleased to attribute this first result to accident, but the accident recurred again and again, to the mirth of the company, and his intense mortification. To give him some chance of winning, I proposed that he should take five of the pockets to my one; he accepted the offer, but still did not win a game, and finally left off without even a momentary advantage. This affair created quite a sensation in the room; and I was asked to favour them with my company on the morrow evening, when perhaps I might meet with a worthier antagonist. I consented, and presented myself on the morrow accordingly. The room was full, and several of the new-comers were anxious to measure their strength against me. My pride was roused, and I shewed them all that they had no chance whatever in the contest. I had refused to play for money from the first, and it was this that puzzled them, while it secured for me their respect. When they requested that I would come again, I declined, on the ground that the table was hot worth playing at—which was true, the pockets being twice the proper size, and the area not quite half the usual dimensions. I derided the idea of practising the science of billiards on such a toy, and refused to have anything more to do with it. Having said thus much, and made my bow to the company, I took my leave with an air of wonderful independence.

It was about nine o'clock in late November as I left the house and proceeded in the teeth of the wind towards the old jetty, where the monster breakers were bursting in thunderous peals on the masses of huge pebbles, round and big as cannon-balls, whose tremendous rattling, as they were dashed to and fro, gave out a sound like the clapping of millions of giant palms, and which wrought most powerfully and agreeably on my imagination. I had seated myself on a fragment of a beam, and was peering through the darkness at the heavy circling masses of water, when I felt a hand on my shoulder. I started to my feet; there stood a dim figure before me, motioning in dumb show—for no voice could be heard—and beckoning me away. I rose, nodded acquiescence, and followed, as he led on towards a shed under the cliff, where a light was burning. When under the lee of the building, and sheltered from the loud roaring of the billows, he turned short round, and presented a figure which I have good reason to remember to my dying day. He was a man of about fifty-five years of age, not more than five feet in height, with a prodigious hunch on his shoulders, yet standing as upright as a dart. A long pale visage; a nose like an eagle's beak; a pair of deep-sunk gray eyes; an ample brow, prominent chin, and thin, bloodless lips: such was the aspect which he turned suddenly towards me, with the not very courteous inquiry:

'I say, young fellow, who the devil *are* you?'

'Really,' said I, 'I may return the inquiry with interest, and with more show of reason. What is your business with me?'

'You need not take offence; there is none intended, I assure you—quite the contrary. Here is my card, and I am to be found at the "Ship."'

I took the card, held it to the light, and read the words, 'Louis Crannel.'

'Your name is strange to me,' I said; 'I have still to learn your business with me.'

'I wish to know who you are, and what is your profession,' he replied. 'My motive for that is not mere curiosity. If you desire concealment, of course I say no more; but it strikes me you do not.'

'You are right,' I said; 'I have no motive for concealment;' and I told him my name, address, and daily employment.

He affected the utmost astonishment. 'Do you mean to tell me,' he asked, as if utterly incredulous, 'that you are such an infatuated ass as to work at a trade for about thirty shillings a week, and yet play such a game at billiards as I have seen you play?'

'Pshaw!' said I; 'billiards are an amusement only; I could not make a living by billiards.'

'The deuce you couldn't! Hark ye, young man, you have the means of independence in your hand, and you don't know it. Now, listen to me. With such skill at billiards as you have, and such knowledge of the world as I could teach you, you might gain any amount of wealth you chose.'

'Or, which is just as probable, might lose what little I have.'

'Not at all. If you are afraid of that, I will make you an offer. You shall quit your trade, and give yourself under my charge. I will take you all over Europe; you shall make the grand tour at [illegible] expense; I will defray all charges of travelling, living, and clothing; you shall visit all the capitals, [illegible] have your own valet, and live like a lord; and I will give you a clear three hundred a year for yourself.'

'In return for which,' said I, 'I am to play where you choose, to win when you choose, and to lose when you choose!'

'Just so,' said he.

'Thank you; I will have nothing to do with it.'

'You will be sorry for it, my lad; and if you are such an idiot as to go grinding at a beggarly trade for a few shillings a week, when you might realise an independence in a few years, you deserve to suffer.'

'Good-night!' I replied, and strode away home as fast as I could.

I had shaken off the tempter for a time, and felt in quite a virtuous glow as I walked homewards through the dull streets and the drizzling rain which began to fall. Next day, however, as I stood at my work in the dreary, cobwebby shop, the vision which Mr Crannel's words had conjured up to my imagination returned with double force, and in brilliant contrast to the surrounding circumstances. My avocation for the first time grew distasteful, and I longed for the hour of release. When it came, I sallied out to the sea-shore, at the old spot, and dreamed away an hour there to the murmur of the subsiding gale. I caught myself once or twice looking round to see if Mr Crannel would make his appearance again. He did not come, and I suspect that I walked home that night with a feeling of disappointment.

On the following day, Crannel came into the shop while I was left in charge during the temporary absence of my uncle, and bought a few trifling articles, the selection of which occupied him half an hour. He now renewed his offer, and begged me to think of it calmly at my leisure, informing me at the same time that he should remain at the 'Ship' for another week, and should be happy to see me at any moment.

I told him that there was no probability that I should change my determination; but he must have seen that my resolution was not so firm as it had been at our first encounter; and it is likely that he already felt certain that I should swallow the bait. After this, he waylaid me every night in my walks, and thus, in repeated interviews, from which I had not the resolution to refrain, at length won me over to his purpose. I accepted his proposition in terms with which the reader is already acquainted, and we drew up a duplicate agreement at his hotel, which was mutually signed, and of which each of us retained a copy. The agreement bound me to him for three years, though it only covenanted that I should render him my services whenever called upon, for the salary named—no reference being made to the nature of the services.

I had to make up a tale to satisfy my old uncle, who was most unwilling to let me go; but he was appeased at last, and gave me his blessing at parting. It was the second week in December when I stepped on board the steam-boat with Crannel, and sailed for Calais. I had never been to sea before; the passage proved most tempestuous, and the boat nearly foundered midway. I was miserably sick, and longed to go at once to the bottom. Crannel watched and waited on me with almost a woman's tenderness—got me to bed as soon as we touched the shore, and could not have manifested more care and kindness had I been, as people thought I was, his only son.

A night's repose restored me; and the next morning, an 'artist' made his appearance, who took my measure, and in a few days sent in such a magnificent wardrobe, made in the recent Parisian fashion, as qualified me, in appearance at least, for any society in Europe. Meanwhile, Crannel made me aware of the particulars of his plan. I was to assume the character of an English country gentleman of fortune on his travels. I was to be passionately fond of billiards, and about as clever with the cue as country gentlemen usually are—playing a wild game, in a reckless, cautionless way, but, for obvious reasons, playing only for moderate stakes. It would be his part to drop in occasionally during my play, when he would make his own bets, either in my favour or against me, as he chose, and I was to win or lose according to signals agreed upon between us. In order to avoid suspicion, I was to conceal my real strength, even when it was most required, and to win, when to win was imperative, as if by accident rather than design. With regard to the connection between us, it was agreed that we should not appear too intimate, or, on the other hand, too distant and reserved; we were to be casual acquaintances, on good terms with each other, and sometimes winning each other's money at a quiet morning game.

All these preliminaries being settled, I spent a couple of days in private practice at a French table—the continental tables being very different from those to which I had been accustomed—in order to familiarise myself with their peculiarities; and then we started by separate conveyances, I and my valet leading the way, for Brussels.

THE BRITISH SOLDIER—AT HOME.

Having on a recent occasion pointed out some of the peculiarities in the constitution of the British army, the sort of men composing it, and the motives for their enlistment—we shall now endeavour to give some idea of the life of a soldier *at home;* not as a combatant armed with musket or sword, and marching in foreign regions, but as a fellow-citizen requiring pay, food, dress, lodgment, medicine, culture, recreation, and some sort of provision for his old age. To make this large subject at all manageable, we shall confine it chiefly to the infantry regiments of the line, and to the common soldiers of those regiments—forming the main-stay of our army; while Mr Fonblanque, the latest and best authority in these matters, is the person on whose statements we shall chiefly rely.

Early in the present century, the length of military service was unlimited; to be once a soldier was to be always a soldier, unless the sovereign voluntarily gave a discharge. At present, however, an infantry soldier is engaged for ten years, at the expiration of which he may renew his engagement. He receives about L.3 as 'bounty-money' on enlistment; and the recruiting expenses, journey to the barrack or depôt, kit, clothing, armament, and equipment, make up the sum to about L.20, which is the cost to the state of the raw material out of which a foot-soldier is made.

The *pay* of the British soldier is one of the greatest among many anomalies in our military system. He himself is sorely puzzled to know how much it really amounts to, on account of the deductions or 'stoppages.' In reality, the money at the free disposal of a soldier is rather higher in England than on the continent. A French soldier, after the various deductions are made, has only about 1½d. per day for minor personal indulgences, while an English soldier has about 3d. The nominal pay in England is 1s. per day in the line regiments. But the soldier does not really get this money; his bread and meat are paid for out of his shilling, and he receives the balance; and out of this balance he has to pay for the minor articles of his diet. A daily ration of bread and meat is debited to him at 4½d. out of his shilling. This stoppage is when in barrack or on home-stations; on foreign stations, on board-ship, in the field, and in hospital, other arrangements are made. There is a growing conviction among our statesmen and officers that this is a bad system, clumsy to work, and not altogether honest. 'The fact that this system,' says Mr

Fonblanque, 'deludes the recruit into a belief that he will receive the nominal instead of the actual rate of pay—in other words, that he will have 1s. a day, while in fact he will only have 7½d.—should be an additional argument against its continuance; for although government does not directly lend itself to so unworthy a device, it is well known that the subordinate agents do not hesitate to avail themselves of the fictitious rate of pay among their other baits for tempting recruits.' The mode of payment is simply this—the paymaster of each regiment draws money from the army-agent for that regiment, and advances it to the captains; each captain pays the men (usually about 80 or 100) in his company, and accounts to the paymaster for the amount. This money is not the shilling a day; it is the balance, after deducting the ration-price. The men are paid daily. The few perquisites, or additions to the pay, we shall notice presently.

Next we come to the important matter of *food.* At foreign stations, or in war-time, the dieting of soldiers is a most complicated and difficult matter; but we treat here only of soldiers quietly at home in barracks or fixed stations. Whether at home or abroad, a British soldier expects and receives more animal food than a continental soldier. A French soldier eats 2½ lbs. of bread per day, but adds to it very little solid meat; a British soldier will bear all sorts of privations patiently, save lack of food, and his dinner must include meat, or it is no dinner to him. At most of our barracks, camps, and garrisons, contractors supply the meat and bread, at prices agreed on between them and the government. Usually men of large capital take the contract, and sublet it to other persons. In the French army, in peace-time, the government supply only bread, all the rest being purchased out of the soldier's pay; in England, meat as well as bread is supplied. The whole subject of the subsistence of troops is, however, much less understood in England than in France. The soldiers know little of cooking, and there is no one to teach them. They have their 1 lb. of bread and ¾ lb. of meat daily, and they have fuel and vessels for cooking; but the processes are wasteful and ill understood. Boiled meat is almost a universal diet with them, for hardly any arrangement has yet been made for roasting or baking. Sometimes a few men will club together, and pay for having a joint of meat, with potatoes, baked at a neighbouring bakehouse; if they depend on the barrack facilities, they can scarcely get beyond boiled meat—too often, through bad management, hard and tasteless. They take it in turn to cook, by an arrangement among themselves; but they are sorry cooks at best. Each regiment or detachment receives its quota of meat and bread at a particular hour daily, and distributes to companies and squads. In every company, six women, with their children, are allowed to draw daily rations of bread and meat: these women must be wives of soldiers who have married with the consent of the commanding officer. The whole arrangement, it must be confessed, is a strange one. The soldier's shilling a day is lessened to sevenpence-halfpenny, as a means of paying for, or contributing towards the cost of, his daily ration of bread and meat; and out of this sevenpence-halfpenny, he must pay for whatever he desires to have in the form of vegetables, butter, cheese, condiments, puddings, tea, coffee, sugar, &c. Such of these things as are supplied by the government are debited to him at a low price; but still the system is strangely confused.

The Crimean war was valuable to us, in teaching many a lesson from which we are now gradually profiting. The food of the soldier is one of these. The authorities have it now under consideration wholly to remodel the barrack and camp dietary arrangements; giving to the soldier (not necessarily at greater cost to the nation) a better selected variety of food, better facilities for cooking it, and instructions in the art of cooking. The late M. Soyer supplied to the military authorities many useful hints as to the best mode of obtaining nutriment from a given amount of food; and Colonel Sir A. M. Tulloch—in a valuable document submitted by him in 1857 to the Commission of Inquiry into the Sanitary State of the Army—gave several schemes of dietary, which would greatly improve the soldier's food, without adding to his expenditure. The gallant colonel, whose indefatigable labours excited so much attention three or four years ago, estimated that a well-arranged dietary might be provided by an expenditure on the part of the soldier of only 2d. per day out of his 7½d., in addition to the ration of bread and meat supplied to him. The variety and excellence of this dietary are surprising; but, says Mr Fonblanque, 'the first step must be to instruct our soldiers in the rudiments of the art of cooking, of which they are now lamentably deficient.' The camp at Aldershott is rendering useful service in this particular; Captain Grant has invented simple but efficacious cooking apparatus, by which the men can bake their meat occasionally with speed and comfort.

Next, for the soldier's *dress.* Until a recent period, the clothing of soldiers was so grossly mismanaged as to be made a source of profit to the commanding officers. An arbitrary deduction was made from the men's pay; if this sum fell short of the actual expense, the difference was charged against the soldier; if otherwise, the officer pocketed the difference. The worse the soldier was dressed, the larger were the officers' profits. So many were the abuses under this system, that the captains of companies were deprived of this power, which was given, under certain modifications, to the colonels in command. This was nearly as bad; for the 'clothing colonels' came to consider certain perquisites as among their regular emoluments. The sum allowed per regiment for clothing, by the government, was for its *effective* strength; if the numbers fell short of this, so much the better for the colonel's pocket. The temptations were almost irresistible to make some private arrangement with the contractors, profitable to the officer, but disastrous to the soldier. This was the chief reason why the British soldier was one of the worst clothed in Europe, with a coat and coatee made of wretched cloth, boots that seldom fitted him, and all his garments much less suitable than ought to have been obtained for the sum paid by the nation. Many of the colonels themselves objected to this undignified way of obtaining part of their emoluments. Yet it was not until 1854 that the system was changed. The government now assumes the duty of clothing the troops. The soldiers' dress is anything but what it ought to be; nevertheless, it is gradually improving. The tunic is a great improvement on the coatee; the trousers are looser and easier;—and perhaps we may one day see the ugly and ponderous shako superseded by a lighter form of hat, cap, or felt helmet. Most of the clothing [illegible] supplied annually by open contract; but there [illegible] one government clothing factory, intended to supply [illegible] a test whether 'tailoring' may not occasionally [illegible] advantageously performed by the government [illegible] already it has been found that a sum of L. [illegible] sufficed to manufacture as many infantry suits [illegible] cost L.10,800 on the contract system. The [illegible] must decide this rather important question. We [illegible] said in a former paragraph that every recruit receives [illegible] on enlistment, a complete set of clothing, accoutrements, and other necessaries. When these are [illegible] out, they are replaced on certain rigorous conditions [illegible] Tunic, trousers, and boots are expected to [illegible] year; great-coat, three years; infantry accoutrements [illegible] twelve years. After the first outfit, the soldier, out of his humble 7½d. a day, pays for under-clothing, fatigue or undress suit, knapsack, mess-tin, blacking, &c., constituting his 'kit;' there is a daily stoppage of his pay, somewhat under 3d., for these items. The tunic, great-coat, trousers, and boots or shoes are supplied to him periodically; but any unusual renewals or repairs, if at all attributable to his own neglect, are charged against him. His worn-out tunic is a perquisite; he may sell it; and doubtless many such are to be seen in theatres, fairs, and other places where a red coat is a never-failing object of admiration. The worn-out great-coat, after three winters of service, is returned to the government stores, and sold 'for the benefit of the public.' The actual cost of the uniform and accoutrements of a soldier differs much in different corps; in a line regiment it is about L.3, 7s. per man; in the Horse-Guards, as much as L.8. The late defalcations at Weedon have given the public a painful proof how much remains to be done before the official organisation for clothing the army can be brought into a healthy state.

The *lodgment* of the soldier is another important item in his daily life. A soldier, in our days, has a right to barrack and barrack furniture; but in former times this right was attended to in a very confused manner. An indiscriminate quartering of troops on the inhabitants is a practice wholly alienable to English habits; it led to insurrections some centuries ago, and is now never attempted. It has been sometimes urged that the inhabitants of a town ought not to be fastidious in this matter; since it is found that an infantry regiment generally spends about L.10,000 a year in or near the locality where it is quartered—a boon for which the townsmen ought to be grateful; but this argument, if good at all, is good only to this extent, that the town ought to contribute something towards building barracks in the neighbourhood. Licensed victuallers are still liable to have soldiers billeted on them; they are compelled, when required, to give board and lodging to soldiers, receiving a small and unremunerating rate of payment. This practice is loudly complained of; and there can be little doubt that a sense of justice will lead to its ultimate abandonment. All the more necessary, therefore, is the construction of efficient barracks. The existing barracks have been built, and their repair provided for, at the public expense; the plans are laid down, and the operations directed, by the corps of Royal Engineers; but ordinary builders contract for the work to be done. Unhappily, most of the existing barracks were built at a time when sanitary arrangements were little attended to; as a consequence, the buildings are wofully unfitted for their purpose. Hundreds of valuable soldiers have been killed by these evils, their constitutions being gradually undermined by the unwholesomeness of the atmosphere in which they lived. In most barracks, there is barely two-thirds of the quantity (600 cubic feet) of space now considered necessary to the health of each soldier; and in some there is little more than one-third. A few months ago, the public read with dismay an authenticated account of the barracks belonging to the household troops in London—barracks in which the commonest decency could hardly be observed, so insufficient was the space, and so scandalously neglectful the arrangements. If it be so with a 'crack' and petted corps, we may infer that it is even worse in some of the barracks for the line regiments. In most barracks, the men eat and drink in the same rooms which serve them as dormitories; and thus the air is at all times vitiated. Some of the soldiers are permitted to have their wives with them, but no suitable arrangements are made for that indulgence. It has recently been ascertained that, in 251 barracks, no less than 231 were without any separate accommodation for married soldiers; the women (a few in each company) resided with their husbands under circumstances repulsive to every sense of delicacy and propriety; and even in the exceptional instances, the space afforded to an entire family is not more than ought to be allowed for a single individual. In the camp at Aldershott, where there is a large space available, the huts and barracks ought to exhibit manifold improvements; whether they do so, is a disputed point. At any rate, the *permanent* barracks scattered over the land must be either rebuilt or greatly improved; and it is now admitted on all hands that the country must submit to a large expenditure on this account, before the lodgment of the soldier can be properly attended to.

The *culture* of the soldier and his family has hitherto been miserably neglected; but here, as in other matters, improvements are being wrought, indicative at any rate of a better tone of feeling in the nation generally. There is now an Inspector-general of Military Schools, one of whose duties is to make periodical visits to all the barracks and military stations in the kingdom; he thus becomes acquainted with the state of educational matters in the army (with the exception of its commissioned officers), and carries out the intentions of the government in that respect. There are somewhat under 200 trained army-schoolmasters, ranked in four classes, according to efficiency and position. There are also schoolmistresses, one to each garrison and regiment. English soldiers are a lamentably ignorant body of men in relation to school-matters; and many of them, not merely privates, but sergeants and corporals who have won good fame by years of hard fighting, are glad to attend the barrack and garrison schools. None are obliged to do so; it is optional with all. The pay for adults varies from 4d. to 8d. per month. The soldiers' children are especially encouraged to attend school, the payment varying from 1d. to 2d. per month. The schoolmistresses teach needle-work and industrial employments to the girls, and wholly conduct the infant training. A hope is in many quarters expressed that cooking will be among the useful things taught to these soldiers' daughters—a teaching that may by degrees have its influence on the soldiers themselves. The delicate and difficult subject of religion is kept as free as possible from sectarian jealousy, by limiting to a very small amount, and to a very simple form, the religious teaching in the school-room. The schoolmasters, with stipends varying from about L.48 to L.150 per annum, are permitted, in spare hours, to teach the children of any of the officers who may be in the garrison or station, by private arrangement, in augmentation of their income. Besides the school tuition, arrangements are now gradually being made for the formation of barrack libraries and reading-rooms, where the men may spend, in a rational way, the spare hours which else are so likely to be wasted in vicious indulgences. The Inspector-general of Military Schools makes a selection of books and periodicals; and a small public allowance is made for the pay of librarians and for contingent expenses. A payment of 1d. per month entitles the soldier to the use of the library and reading-room. As to athletic outdoor amusements, our barracks are most insufficiently supplied; the soldier is left to his own resources, with no aid from the state.

Lastly, *pensions*. The soldier's shilling a day is, as we have seen, cut up in an extraordinary way in payment for food, clothing, kit, schooling, &c. He has a few, but only a few, emoluments or extra sources of income. There is a 'good-conduct pay,' from 1d. per day upwards, for men who have rendered many years of good service; there is 1d. a day for 'beer-money,' while on effective home-service; there is 'fatigue-pay,' when soldiers are engaged as artificers or labourers in public works; but with these exceptions—the soldier's necessaries, comforts, and luxuries must all be provided from the source already adverted to. When he is old, he cannot wholly live on his out-pension, but still it aids towards his support. Until the time of Charles II., there was no provision whatever for superannuated soldiers; but that monarch gave up Chelsea Hospital as a home for some of them. In the time of Queen Anne, the system of out-pensions was introduced. At present, Chelsea Hospital is quite unfitted for its original purpose. It cannot accommodate 600, out of an aggregate of more than 60,000 veterans who have duly earned a superannuation allowance. The in-pensioners receive a home, food, clothing, and a little pocket-money. Soldiers have had a *legal* claim since 1806, by act of parliament, to a superannuation allowance; and this allowance is now received by about 64,000 out-pensioners. The sum varies; but taking an aggregate of all ages, merits, ranks, and corps, it amounts to about 1s. per day per man. He may have served a very long time, or may have become weak and ailing after a moderate time, or may have been wounded in action; and all these facts are taken into account in determining the amount of his pension. Well would it be if all our sums of L.1,200,000 per annum were paid for as humane and rational purposes as this item for out-pensions to humble troops.

Such, in brief, is the home-life of an English common soldier, his daily career when not called upon to embark for other lands, or to fight against an enemy. It is a strange existence, deserving the best consideration of all thinking persons. Disgraceful has been the neglect, physical and moral, of the soldiery in past times; but a new feeling has gradually sprung up; an earnest desire is manifested in all quarters to raise the character and improve the condition of the soldier. The process may be costly, but it is worth the cost; for a well-trained soldier, if in health and strength, is estimated to be *worth* (in commercial phrase) L.100; how much his mind and morals are worth, is not a money question.

COURTLY CEREMONY.

D'ISRAELI, in an interesting article in the first series of the *Curiosities of Literature*, is inclined to attribute the birth of courtly ceremony to the Italians, who spent the best part of their lives, one or two hundred years ago, in trumpeting forth their own grandeur, and in attempting to cast that of every other nation into the shade. With all respect for the Italian dignitaries, however, we are not quite content to allow them the credit of introducing etiquette (we mean in its most extended sense) into our own and other courts—we believe the introduction to have taken place at a much earlier period, and to have been, in fact, an offspring of that ancient and most prolific dame, 'necessity.' What, we may ask, would a court be *without* ceremony, and what the dignity of the sovereign, if divested of forms ill understood by, and consequently awful to the vulgar? Fancy how singularly situated must have been a royal lady who had to promulgate amongst her semi-barbarous courtiers a law that 'no noble shall give the queen *a blow*, or snatch anything with violence from her, under the penalty of incurring her majesty's displeasure!' Yet such an enactment has been handed down to us in the records of our Anglo-Saxon monarchy. In such early times, the ceremonies connected with courts were few in number, simply because there were few officers of state to stand between sovereign and subject, and to enforce an observance of them. To the possession, however, of the landed estates conferred by the Conqueror upon his Norman followers, many before unheard-of services connected with the king's person and dwelling were attached, and thus, almost imperceptibly, the number of royal officers increased, until the sovereign was surrounded by an assemblage of officials, who shewed to the nation at large their own grandeur, by exacting profound reverence both towards themselves and their royal master.

All institutions rise from small beginnings, and the fees received by the officers of state in early times, are proof sufficient of their own poor dignity in the infancy of their several offices. The *Black Book of the Exchequer* shews us great men receiving as their perquisites, amongst other things, the *ends of the wax-candles* burnt in the king's palace—the third man in the realm, the lord chancellor, being entitled to '1 great and 40 small candle-ends.' The 'aquarius,' or bathing attendant of Henry II., who was to be 'not under the degree of a baron,' was to receive 1d. every time the king bathed, for drying the towels, and 4d. for all 'extraordinary' baths indulged in by the monarch—that is, for all baths taken at other times than on the three great feasts of the year.

How state-officers had increased in number and dignity, before the days of Henry VIII., we may imagine, by perusing a short manuscript in the Harleian Collection, entitled *The Booke of Henrie Erle of Arundell, Lord Chamberleyn to King Henrie theighte;* in which there is set forth the exact duties and observances prescribed to all the chief and petty officers about the court. We will only make one extract from this scarce work, which is well worthy of a careful survey by the curious reader; it is entitled, 'The Ordre for the Makyng of the King's Bedd.' 'First must a groom or a page take a lighted torch, and go to the wardrobe of the king's bed, and bring thence out of the wardrobe the stuff for the king's bed into the chamber for the making of the same, wherein there must be a gentleman-usher and four noblemen, yeomen of the chamber, the groom to stand at the bed's foot with his torch. They of the wardrobe, opening the king's stuff of his bed upon a fair sheet between the said groom and the bed's foot, the gentleman-usher shall command them what they must do. A yeoman, with a dagger, must first search the straw of the bed, that there be no untruth therein; and then the yeomen must cast the bed of down upon the straw, and one of them must *tumble himself* upon it for the search thereof. Then must the same bed be beat and tossed, and the bolsters be laid thereon, but note that the yeomen must not touch the bed with their hands. . . . . . Then the wardrober shall deliver such pillows as shall please the king, and the yeomen shall lay them upon the bolster, and the bolster shall then be covered with the upper sheet, and the same shall be trussed in under the bolster; and then shall all present make a cross on the bed, and kiss all places where their hands have touched the same; and so they shall stick up the angels about the bed, and let down the curtains thereof. *Item.* A squire for the body or a gentleman usher ought to set the king's sword at the bed's head. *Item.* A squire of the body ought to charge a secret groom or page to have the keeping of the said bed with a light unto the time the king be disposed to go to it. *Item.* A groom or page ought to take a torch while the bed is in making, to fetch a loaf of bread and a pot with ale, and a pot with wine for them that make the bed, one for every man!'

It was not, indeed, until the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. that courtly etiquette reached its culminating-point. Nobles of the highest rank, then, [illegible] many instances had to perform the most servile offices, and they being regarded by the vulgar as creatures of a superior order to themselves, raised the popular [illegible] of *the sovereign* to a height unimaginable to us [illegible] present day. The Virgin Queen was most [illegible] in exacting from her courtiers every observance, however trifling, which served to convey an idea of her own dignity; and whilst she thought proper to object to one candidate for the office of lord chamberlain on the ground that he had lost a front tooth, she sharply rebuked another great lord for 'not putting his knee *well to the ground*, when he made his obeisance to her.'

Elizabeth, however, got on very well, for she only required courtly reverence to be shewn to *herself*, and had therefore only herself to satisfy. Very different was it with her successor James. Ambassadors from every nation in Europe flocked to London to greet the new king on his arrival from Scotland, many of them from courts far more punctilious than our own on all points of etiquette, and each required the same exact attention to be paid to *him* as was considered due in his own country to his king and master.

The two most troublesome ambassadors were undoubtedly those from Spain and France. Each of these envoys was scrupulous in exacting every iota of ceremonial observance towards himself, and each was just as careful to prevent any act of favour shewn to the other by the English king from detracting from his own consequence.

Having thus at his court two ambassadors equal in point of dignity, James for a long while experienced considerable difficulty in preserving peace between himself and their respective masters, and at length hit upon the ingenious expedient of inviting them *alternately* to his entertainments, and so avoided the constant disputes arising between them respecting precedence.

Undoubtedly, the reason of the continual embroilments of these ambassadors is to be found in the fact that both had come from courts where etiquette was considered of greater importance than life itself. Philip III. of Spain had almost toasted himself to death, before an unusually large fire in his chamber, simply because etiquette would not allow him to move away, and the proper officer to damp the fire did not happen to be in attendance. The second wife of Charles II. of Spain one day fell off her horse while hunting, and her foot catching in the stirrup, she was in the most imminent danger of being killed. No one, however, dared venture to relieve her, it being against the law for any, save the chief of the royal pages, to touch any part of the person of the queen of Spain, and least of all her *feet*. At last, two cavaliers went to her assistance, and having extricated her, at once saddled their fleetest horses, and prepared to leave the country, in order to save their lives; but they were pardoned by the king, at the queen's intercession.

So also with the French court. Nobles of the highest order daily attended the king in his dressing, studiously careful to comply with every form laid down respecting that important operation. The great chamberlain of the kingdom handed him his dressing-gown (and on the morning of the coronation, his shirt), the first *valet de chambre* put on the right sleeve of the shirt, the first valet of the wardrobe the left. Another valet tied the king's left garter, his majesty tied the right; and the master of the wardrobe put the cravat round the royal neck, while the 'cravatteer' *tied it*.

In the queen's apartment, the first bed-chamber woman let down the queen's hair, the first maid of honour combed it; the first maid-in-waiting put on the queen's shoes and stockings, the queen herself tied her garters; the first maid-in-waiting handed the petticoat to the first bed-chamber woman, who put it on the queen.

In the important business of dressing her hair, Mary de Medicis employed no less than eight artistes, who had each a different office assigned; one did the cutting; another, the greasing; a third, the parting; a fourth, the curling; a fifth, the powdering; and so on. No other operation of the toilet could be compared to that of dressing the hair of a court-lady. 'I have just made a visit to the new Duchess de Vantadour,' says Madame de Sevigné, in one of her letters. 'Le Martin has managed her hair, just as she herself pleased, for a model of the mode. Most of the hair is cropped close to the head; the rest is frizzed and curled up with a hundred papers, which all night long make her undergo a perfect martyrdom; and her head, after all, looks just like a little cabbage, quite round!'

So rich and valuable were ladies' head-dresses in our own and other countries, that about 1717, ladies were warned in a public journal, when proceeding to the queen's ball, to sit on the *front* seats of their coaches, as many evil-disposed persons had got up behind, and with a sharp knife cut a hole in the leather backs of many coaches, and stolen lace and jewels off the heads of the ladies inside. So utterly incapable did royal personages become, with all the attentions we have just mentioned lavished upon them, that the temporary loss of an attendant was a serious thing indeed; and we find one queen of France bitterly bewailing her misfortunes, because she could 'neither eat, nor dress, nor sleep,' three of her maids of honour having been bitten by a mad dog, and sent by order of the royal physician to Dieppe, to be soused over head and ears in the sea!

The ceremonies of the toilet just alluded to were joined to similar ones attached to each action of the sovereign's everyday-life; particular dresses were worn on particular occasions, and the omission of any ornament, however useless, would have been regarded as a serious violation of established form and etiquette. How amusingly was this shewn in our own country, when Queen Anne, being too unwell to *walk* in a certain procession, went in a sedan-chair, with the train of her robe *held up behind the conveyance*.

Throughout the reign of Charles I., the ceremonies attendant upon all royal proceedings increased to a very great extent. The interregnum, however, materially damped all such matters; and during the Protectorate, the debauched reign of the second Charles, and the miserable kingship of his successor, such a diminution of dignity had the things pertaining to royalty suffered, that it required all the efforts of Mary and of 'good Queen Anne' to place matters of etiquette once more upon a proper footing; her sedan-chair business, just mentioned, was probably one of the bold measures resorted to for this purpose.

Whatever may have been the dignity kept up in the courts of the first two Georges, we do not think it could very much have exceeded the ceremony observed during the reign of George III. Miss Burney, who, as it is well known, had the honour (which was far from a pleasure) of being, for some considerable time, a resident in the court of Queen Charlotte, as 'keeper of the robes,' gives us a good deal of information in her Letters and Diary upon this subject. There is, amongst other things, an account of an unexpected visit paid by the king, to a lady in whose house Miss Burney was residing, at Kew. The whole family were engaged upon his arrival in the interesting game of 'Puss in the Corner'—each during the visit retained the same place as she had occupied when the king was announced, his majesty standing in the centre of the apartment, and addressing first one, and then another of the company. Miss Burney is charmed with the whole affair, and amusingly relates what a difficulty their hostess was placed in, who, while standing with her back to the wall, heard a knock at the outer door, which she recognised as that of Queen Charlotte. She was herself bound to usher the queen in, but she was equally bound not for a moment to turn her back upon the king; so, says Miss Burney, 'she slid sidewise along the wall till she got to the door, then put her hand behind her, and caught hold of the handle, and so slowly opened it, and backed out.' The queen entering, after a gracious salutation of all the company, sits down, as was her custom; and then follows this curious piece of luxury—'a servant placed before her a small table which she has carried about for her use wherever she goes, to put her work or coffee on, or to stand behind when obliged to stand, in order to look comfortable. When their majesties left,' says our authoress, '*all* followed them to their carriage, for it is the custom for all to whom the king or queen has spoken in any house when on a visit, to do so.'

But all Miss Burney's love of courtly ceremony appears to have evaporated when she had been but a few weeks resident at Kew and St James's. The following is a letter to her sister on the subject:

'In the first place, when before royalty, you must not *cough*. If you find a cough tickling in your throat, you must arrest it from making any sound; if you find yourself choking with the forbearance, you must choke, but not cough.

'In the second place, you must not sneeze. If you have a vehement cold, you must take no notice of it; if your nose membranes feel a great irritation, you must hold your breath; if a sneeze still insists upon making its way, you must oppose it by keeping your teeth grinding together; if the violence of the repulse breaks some blood-vessel, you must break the blood-vessel, but not sneeze.

'In the third place, you must not upon any account stir either hand or foot. If by chance a black pin runs into your head, you must not take it out; if the pain is very great, you must be sure to bear it without wincing; if it brings the tears into your eyes, you must not wipe them off; if they give you a tingling by running down your cheeks, you must look as if nothing was the matter. If the blood should run from your head by means of the black pin, you must let it run; if you are uneasy to think of making such a blurred appearance, you must be uneasy, but you must say nothing about it. If, however, the agony is very great, you may privately bite the inside of your cheek or of your lip for a little relief, taking care, meanwhile, to do it so cautiously as to make no apparent dent outwardly; and with that precaution, if you even gnaw a piece out, it will not be minded, only be sure either to swallow it, or commit it to a corner of the inside of the mouth till they are gone, for you must on no account *spit*.'

In other places, she tells us that 'no one may ask the sovereign a question,' nor 'make a remark without being previously addressed,' nor 'wear gloves in the royal presence,' nor 'quit the presence, having been once addressed, without a formal dismissal.' 'You may not knock at the door of a room previous to entering, if one of their majesties be there; but if a *servant*, you must *scratch* in a peculiar way, if one of the royal family *shake the handle*.'

All this must have been fearfully irksome, and we scarcely wonder at the Duke of York—as recorded by Dr Doran—so often escaping privately from the palace, and being at length found enjoying much ease with but little dignity, shelling peas, in company with a cottage beauty, far away from the royal residence!

And what, the reader may probably inquire, is the state of these courtly ceremonies at the present day? Perhaps a more difficult question, save to those whose position as statesmen or servants brings them continually into connection with the daily routine of a court, could not be asked. Our old friend, Sir John Finett, initiated us pretty well into the courtly etiquette of the first James; and at long intervals of time, one and another person has presented to the world glimpses of kings and their dignified existence. Mr Raikes is, we believe, the most recent authority on the subject, and in his recently published Journal tells us a few anecdotes connected with the court of her present Majesty, which shew that the old-fashioned formalities are not by any means extinct at the present day.

'When the Queen was on a visit to the royal family of France at Eu, the queen of Belgium had been told that her Majesty of England took every morning at ten o'clock a glass of iced water. Accordingly, on the day after her arrival, a servant duly made his appearance at the appointed hour, bearing on a silver salver a carafe and two glasses, which he tendered to the sovereign, who declined the refreshment with a wave of the hand. The Belgian queen seeing this, whispered to her son, who was present, to *pour out* a glass of water, and offer it to the Queen; this being done, was graciously accepted, the fact being that etiquette would not allow her Majesty to pour out the water for herself when a servant was present!' So, too, when the Queen, Louis-Philippe, and the Duke of Wellington, paid a visit to Eton, upon the visitors' book being presented to them, the king of the French somewhat ungallantly took up a pen, and signed his name at the top of the page. Etiquette would not permit the Queen to sign her name *under* any other; she therefore *turned over* the all but blank leaf, and wrote her name on the top of the next one, and then handed the pen to the Duke, who, by the by, was so excited—fancy the Duke of Wellington being excited!—at the honour done to him, that he actually spelt his name 'Weggington!' The Queen now, as formerly, may not speak to a tradesman. We ourselves have seen her standing not a yard away from one, addressing all her inquiries to an equerry, who repeated them to the tradesman, and again repeated to her Majesty all his answers.

A number of similar illustrations of the subject of our article might be given, but we forbear longer to trespass on the reader's indulgence. Whether all the ultra-polite matters at which we have glanced are really necessary to preserve the grandeur and dignity of the sovereign, or whether they are mere remnants of an absurd and useless system of semi-idolatry to royalty, we must leave our readers to determine. Enough has been said, if not to corroborate the sardonic riddle of 'What is majesty without its externals?' at least to prove that it can be exceedingly ridiculous *with* them.

EARLY MORNING.

CROWNED with limp dew-pearls, lo! the jewelled Morn
Peeps coyly o'er the mist-plumed eastern hills;
I wot ere long she'll make the silvery rills,
That now lie sleeping like pale maids forlorn,
Smile as young mother when her firstling's born;
And lay her finger on each flowret's lip,
Softly as swallow in the pool doth dip
Its airy wing, till blushes rich adorn
Their tingling cheeks, and Flora sings for joy.
Sweet Morn! I would not now be dead in sleep,
Whilst thou rid'st forth in crimson chariot fair,
For all the treasures of yon dim-seen deep.
O view sublime! O incense-laden air!
With these compared, wealth seems an idiot's toy!

J.

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RATHER PERSONAL.

Having made a discovery under the promise of especial secrecy, we are now about to make it public in these pages. It may be wrong, and even vicious, in us so to do, but people should not impart to persons of our temperament information which they wish to restrict to their particular circle. Is not our first duty owed to the public? Are we, who have just discovered the greatest Anomaly of the age, to be hindered from the proclamation of it by a mere sense of selfish responsibility? We trow not. If it were but alive and purchasable—no matter what we had promised—we protest we would carry such a wonder up and down the country, with an extra charge for the exhibition, on account of the outrage upon our conscience, and the greatness of the moral sacrifice. And what an Anomaly it is! Conceive, good Public, a Politician who does not want to be in power—a Curate who has no ambition to be a Bishop—a Woman who has no pretensions to beauty—a Jar of Pickles without paint—an Irish water-fall without a ragged guide to it—a Cabman giving back your sixpence of superfluous payment.

Guess again, ingenious friends, although success will never be your portion. A Briton without a love for lords—an M.P. without a quotation from Virgil—a Medical Practitioner without three quarrels on his hands, at least.

Nay, nor those either, although we grant you we have never seen such *raræ aves.*

Our Anomaly is this; a Newspaper which makes no charge for advertisements, and which is not ambitious of circulation; a Newspaper that you cannot purchase, nor even obtain a glance at, unless under peculiar circumstances; a Newspaper whose principles have never changed, from the period of its establishment, fifty years ago perhaps, till now. We happened to be in the house of one who enjoys the privilege of having it sent to him, and in that indirect manner got at the contents of the current number; but the proprietor had his eye fixed on us all the while, and like a school-boy, who—either for a pecuniary remuneration, or from motives of friendship—has let out his lollipop to be sucked by his personal friend, and watches him jealously, and pulls the string to which it is attached with violence, when he deems the treat has lasted sufficiently long—so did our host withdraw from us the forbidden Newspaper before we had time to make all our intended notes. From long experience, however, we understand how to reap the most from opportunities of this kind, and the result of our observations here published, small as it is to what it might have been, will doubtless not a little astonish him.

The principal characteristic of the Paper in question is its extreme personality, which, notwithstanding that it is published by the government, exceeds anything in the *Paul Prys* and *Satirists* of the worst epochs. It calls a spade a spade with a vengeance, and makes as little scruple about stigmatising a fellow-creature as a 'felon,' a 'suspicious character,' a 'thief,' a 'tramp,' or a 'murderer,' as though there were no such thing as law against Libel in the British code. To be plain with you, this Newspaper is the ancient *Hue and Cry*, or modern *Police Gazette*, which (we do not think for very excellent reasons) is now not to be procured by the public at large—though the public that are *not* at large see plenty of it—without a direct order from a magistrate. It consists of a good-sized sheet of eight pages, and contains 'the substance of all Informations received in cases of Felony, and of Misdemeanours of an aggravated nature, and against Receivers of Stolen Goods, reputed Thieves, and Offenders escaped from Custody, with the time, the place, and the circumstance of the Offence; the Names of Persons charged with Offences, who are known, but not in custody, and a Description of those who are not known, their Appearance, Dress, and other marks of identity; the names of Accomplices and Accessories, with every particular that may lead to their Apprehension; a Description, as accurate as possible, of Property that has been stolen, and a minute Description of Stolen Horses, for the purpose of tracing and recovering them.' To which is subjoined, from the War-office, a list of Deserters from the Army and Navy, with their Descriptions.

Our Anomaly is therefore, perhaps, the only newspaper in which it would give young authors, or others, no satisfaction whatever to appear in print. There is not one word of eulogium in it from beginning to end; its criticisms are cold blooded and uncharitable to a degree scarcely surpassed even by the professed organs of Literature; while its coolness in imputing the worst motives to human actions, has probably not a parallel outside the walls of the two Houses of Parliament.

The first two columns of this periodical are devoted exclusively to 'murder and maliciously wounding;' and the first notice on the list is that of 'the naked body of the man found on the sea-shore near Ramsgate Harbour, with the left hand cut off, and a stab under the left breast.' Since this information, however, was supplied, that mystery, as most of our readers are aware, has been solved so far as to be proved to be no murder, but one of the most determined suicides upon record. The minutest particulars are of course subjoined, but most of them have already appeared in other newspapers. There are no less than four newly born male infants 'found floating,' dead, within the space of the last fortnight. There is one case of maliciously wounding; and one, which we are all too well acquainted with, of murder on the High Seas. John Buchanan, late chief-engineer on board the *Bogota,* who is 'wanted' for the cruel murder of Thomas Launder, is thus described: 'Age, about 25 or 26; height, 5 feet 10 or 11 inches; smart, wiry, muscular make; swarthy or bronzed complexion—from being several years employed as chief-engineer on some of the Pacific Steam Company's ships, plying on the coast of South America—rather long, thin face; whiskers shaved off; dark-brown, nicely cultivated moustache, *which may be shaved off;* dark-brown wavy hair, parted in the centre; shews his front teeth—a small bit chipped off one of them—rather round shoulders; dressed as a gentleman when last seen, and of gentlemanly appearance; can speak Spanish; he is a native of Glasgow, and speaks with the Scotch accent. *It is supposed* he will try to get out to Panama, Chili, or some part of South America, where he is well known; *supposed he will have got his hair and moustache dyed red.* If any clue is obtained of him, the superintendents of police are respectfully desired to send a telegraphic message to the Central Police Office, Hatton Garden, Liverpool, the expenses of which will be immediately remitted.'

Next follow two Forgeries, and five Robberies from the Person. Then no less than sixteen Burglaries, with the most detailed account of the articles stolen, and of the personal appearance of the supposed thief. The precision with which the latter is stated would lead one to imagine that the bull's-eye of every police lantern was a photographic machine, and indelibly pictured each feature and garment whereupon it was turned. 'Even a strange man seen going over the hill in the direction of the house,' at the time of a certain robbery, is described as being 'from 35 to 40 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, sandy whiskers, fresh face, and dressed in a dark velveteen jacket, light vest, cotton cord trousers, and black Jim Crow hat. He looked like a person likely to be employed by farmers.' A Jim Crow hat we *have* heard of, although we should perhaps be puzzled to define it; but a 'Billy Cock' hat—which seems to be the reigning mode with those 'between whom and twelve of their fellow-countrymen a difference of opinion exists'—is a novelty to us. A 'monkey jacket' (much affected by nautical thieves), we are of course acquainted with, but a 'swinger' coat is again an article about which our book of fashions is silent.

Of Horse and Cattle Stealing, there are ten informations, including the loss of ewes, lambs, horses, an ass, and a cow. One 'very fast trotter,' with cart, was taken from Amen Corner, Paternoster Row, and within a stone's throw of the London establishment of this *Journal;* but we hope it is needless to inform our readers that not the breath of suspicion attaches to any contributor of ours. There are thirteen cases of Embezzlement, one of which is committed by a 'Striker,' of the nature of which occupation we are ignorant; and one by a person who is a 'Scotchman and a glass-blower by trade.' Among the 'Felonies not otherwise described,' there is this very touching advertisement: 'Stolen, by a short woman, dressed in shabby black, on the 30th ultimo, near St Giles's Church, a male infant, age nine months, fair complexion, light-blue eyes, light hair, and dressed in a light-blue frock, pink pinafore, brown knitted jacket, Tuscan hat with brown ribbon, and crimson cape; *answers to the name of Willey.*' Which latter announcement sounds rather canine than human. The poor child was probably abducted for begging purposes. There is a reward of L.150 offered for the apprehension of the mutilators of the altar-piece in Marylebone Church, an outrage, apparently, of fanaticism, and one very unusual in this country. In the Miscellaneous Informations, we only find two advertisements of Persons Missing from their homes, which makes somewhat suspicious that pretence of 'lost friends' under which so many come to identify every unclaimed body. One of these missing persons has been lost for three whole years, and the other for little more than as many days; but there is much significance, which has doubtless been well observed in the proper quarter, in the fact that both these disappearances have occurred in the same neighbourhood—near Cleobury Mortimer, Salop.

Here follows the description of one, who, independently of his eminence in his particular profession, would in any walk of life be entitled a marked man. This gentleman, 'believed to have committed a series of robberies in different parts of the kingdom,' stands remanded at Leeds for one of them. 'He gives the name of Lars Peter Nigolar Ernst, a native of Elsinore, in Denmark, a sailor: he is about 38 years of age; height, 5 feet 7 inches; sallow complexion, brown hair, gray eyes, gold ear-rings in ears, a slight scar on forehead, mole on left cheek, two moles on chest, one mole in bend of right arm, scars on each groin, many scars at the bottom of his back and left hip; the right lower arm is marked, in blue ink, with the figures—a sailor and a woman joining hands, and underneath the letters "ANA-LPNE," and a ship with three masts; the left arm is marked, in blue ink, with the figures of a woman, a mermaid, and the letter "M" in the centre of a heart; underneath, the letters "M M," and a tree, a man, a woman, and sea-horse, in red and blue ink intermixed, and the letters "ANNA MARIA GONZALES;" a sea-serpent the left wrist; a man's head in centre of a ring back of left hand; a ring with diamond on the finger of left hand. He has a small silver ring thro the nipple of each breast, and on centre of breast blue ink, the figures of Christ and the cross, and man on one side, and a woman on the other, weepin on the front of left thigh, in blue ink, the figure three men and a serpent in a tree; on the fron the right thigh, the figure of an Indian warrior; of left leg marked, in blue ink, with the let "PLSMMSS;" right calf marked, in blue ink, crown, and the letters "MK MS WLPNE HSCS;" also a red and brown mark near the bend of the elbow.' Certainly, this person must at one perio his existence at least—the period when he thus trated himself so copiously—have intended to an honest part in the world. It is incredible any man, not an absolute idiot, should ha himself tattooed in this manner, so as recognisable in every portion of his body, had he intended to lead a felonious existence, which above all others demands the discreetest privacy and incognito. Indeed, since writing the above, we read in those columns of the *Times* devoted to intelligence respecting the class of society in which Mr Nigolar Ernst 'moves,' that his embellishments have been fatal to him, and that he is 'wanted' by a series of 'parties,' upon all sorts of charges.

The Property found by Police-officers upon the Persons of Prisoners, is, generally, it must be confessed, of a suspicious character, and includes articles not certainly familiar to ordinary pockets: such as ivory-hafted table-knives, oil-paintings rolled up small, portions of feather-beds, and silver pickle-forks. One honest couple are lucky enough to have in their possession no less than three watches, and the like number of wedding-rings. The doubtful, not to say incredulous manner in which their account of themselves is reported, contrasts strangely with the uncompromising personal description of them by the police. *They give their names* Joseph and Maria Clarkson, and *say they are* man and wife. The man is about twenty-five years of age; 5 feet 5 inches high; stout made, full-faced, pock-pitted, thick lips, light complexion, light-brown hair, whiskers shaved off, and lame of the right leg, which causes him to walk with a halt; and *says he is* a whip-maker.' Politeness and a devotion to the Sex prohibit us from transcribing the particulars concerning Mrs Clarkson, which are minute, even to the 'dirty-white straw-bonnet,' and the 'black fall which she generally wears tied under the chin'—an unbecoming fashion which can scarcely enhance her charms.

We now come to a more important portion of our newspaper—namely, the Description of the Deserters from her Majesty's Service. The office number, by which each man is known in the books, begins with 141,774, from which we cannot of course deduce anything without knowing at what date the numbering commenced. However, from the 14th of March to the 5th of April, there appear to have been no less than 360 desertions, or at the rate of 120 per week. A reward of one pound, instead of ten shillings, has been given since December 11, 1857, for the better apprehension of runaways. The majority of these seem to have been very soon nauseated with the taste of the laurel; 'recruit,' 'not finally approved,' or 'not surgically inspected,' being appended to most of their names. Only about one half of these persons levant in uniform (and these, it is probable, from necessity); while not a few, whether from honest motives, or from a wish to mitigate future punishment, cause their regimental properties to be returned. The office number of the Deserters from the Militia begins with 21,115; and in five weeks, these only amount to eighty, or sixteen per week. When he does make up his mind to decamp, however, the Militiaman seems to generally make up a considerable parcel likewise; 'a great-coat and two pair of trousers,' 'summer and winter trousers,' or 'the whole of "reg. nec."' (regimental necessaries). When he returns anything, which is rarely enough, it is usually such things as his 'chaco and waistbelt,' which he cannot use.

Thus, Desertion from the Militia, though much more unusual, in comparison, seems to be more systematic than in the Line; and is probably practised by professionals, who repeat the offence again and again.

There are only ten Deserters from the Marines, and twenty from the Navy; but, for obvious reasons, our Bow Street newspaper cannot present so accurate an account of them as of those of the other services. It is finally to be remarked, that, like our pictorial friend Mr Nigolar Ernst, deserters are much addicted to the practice of tattooing themselves, and exhibit such varieties of taste in their self-ornamentation, as would puzzle Mr Ruskin and all the Fine-art Commissioners to classify.

A CHINESE MONASTERY.

FOU-TCHOW-FOO is the capital of the Fo-kien province, and is said to contain about half a million of inhabitants. J—— and I (who had got there by the usual methods of sea and river transit, not particularly noteworthy) were of course curious to see this far-famed city; so, with D—— to make up the trio, we started one morning at eleven o'clock in three sedan-chairs, each carried by three coolies. We proceeded through several narrow, crowded streets, and then crossed the long bridge, crowded also with passengers and beggars, some of the latter being most repulsive in appearance, for the principle of a Chinese beggar is to render himself so disgusting, that charity becomes marvellously quickened by a desire that he, the object thereof, should 'move on.' Having passed to the north side of the river, we were carried through fields and scattered streets, till we again entered a populous suburb, the inhabitants of which regarded us curiously, they being unaccustomed to the sight of barbarians. After a journey of four miles, more or less, we passed within the walls—somewhat to my relief, for the heat was intense—but only to traverse more dingy streets and lanes, and make our exit by another gate. Here we alighted at a café, or rather tea-shop, to inquire the way to a sulphur-spring, famed for its healing qualities, which was the first object of our visit. The shop was filled with tea-drinkers and smokers; and for their gratification there sat, in the middle of the room, a young lady, with remarkably small feet, and a voice to match, who sung to the accompaniment of a guitar, played by a man who might be her husband, father, or owner. The people, although all of the lower orders, were perfectly polite. Several rose with a smile and a well-bred bow, to offer seats, and a waiter presented himself to take our orders; while the music continued, as if the micropodic young person had been in the habit of singing on her falsetto to foreigners at least twice a week.

Luckily, J—— had by this time acquired a slight smattering of the Fo-kien, so he was able to inquire the way to the baths; and as the distance was not very great, we left our chairs, and proceeded on foot, walking in an easy costume, consisting of white trousers, shirt, sun-hat, cheroot, and an umbrella; but the Celestials were not acquainted with the fashions of Bond Street, and in their eyes, no doubt, we were habited in complete full dress.

The first room in the *Badhaus*, a one-storied building of rather mean appearance, answers to the pump-room of English watering-places. Here those who have undergone the process of parboiling, and perhaps a few who, to judge from their complexions, seldom contemplate submitting themselves to such a severe discipline, enjoy a friendly gossip, slowly sipping weak tea, and smoking long brass pipes.

With true American coolness, followed by his two more modest companions, J——, regardless of the stares and smiles of astonishment that saluted us on all sides, proceeded to explore the various baths, dressing-room, &c., which, not over-clean nor neat in their appointments, opened from the tea-room. Crossing the latter chamber, and following a coolie bearing two water-pails, we passed into a kind of back-yard, where we found the hot spring bubbling from the ground. J——, anxious to test the temperature, unhesitatingly dipped his hand into the steaming well; but drew it forth again, with a loud exclamation, to the great amusement of a group of spectators, in every variety of undress. Having seen enough of the Chinese spa, we returned to our chairs, and again entered the city.

Even the best streets are narrow, and the houses are usually of but one, or, at most, two stories, with projecting eaves, that cast a broad shadow on the pavement below. The shops are quite open, and are crossed by a counter, as with us, on one side of which stands the merchant, and on the other, the purchaser.

The grocers, provision-merchants, and other shopkeepers of the more vulgar kind, wear no clothing but a pair of very wide blue or buff drawers, and a pouch, which answers the purpose of a small apron, being hung round the neck by a chain, and covering part of the chest and stomach. They are generally pale and round-shouldered—indicative of unwholesome air, perhaps, of a poor diet, and of a very sedentary life, for a Chinaman rarely takes a 'constitutional walk.' Strongly contrasted with these are the brawny porters, carrying immense burdens—slung on a bamboo, and carried by one, two, or more coolies, according to the weight—who are constantly threading their way through the busy crowd.

One is struck by the incessant traffic and bustle; buying, selling, hawking, begging, chattering, laughing, elbowing, a little swearing, and the constant monotonous cry of the loaded porters, equivalent to 'By your leave, good people!' There are plenty of itinerant vendors of every kind of horrible-looking eatable and drinkable; and in a comparatively quiet corner, you may see the barber at work on the head, tail, ears, or eyelashes of a customer, while you meet many of his *confrères* carrying their apparatus of basins, &c., slung at the two ends of a bamboo, and supported on the shoulder. There is no beast of burden, excepting the coolie, nor any vehicle but the sedan.

We dismounted in the principal street, which is somewhat wider than the others, and gay with numerous painted and gilded sign-boards—for every house is a shop—and diverted ourselves by the sight of the people, and the wares exposed for sale; sometimes entering a shop, and ourselves becoming objects of curiosity. One merchant, a jeweller, examined with great attention the buckle of my belt, an elegant piece of Brummagem manufacture.

At the end of the street is one—a *cul de sac*, and consequently quiet and free from traffic—which *we* call 'Curio Street,' because it is entirely composed of curiosity-shops. Followed by a little crowd of observers, we visited each of these; and in the first, were regaled by the merchant with peaches and weak tea. In consideration, I suppose, of these courtesies, he demanded three times the proper price for two bronze vases, of very graceful form, not unlike the antique, and inlaid with silver in patterns of flowers, trees, and birds.

The negotiation was conducted somewhat in this manner:

Purchaser. What is the price of these bronzes?

Merchant. Their price is fifteen dollars.

P. Ahem—ha—I'll give you two dollars for them.

Merchant shrugs his shoulders, and smiles deprecatingly, as though he would say: 'Nay, good sir, you are pleased to be facetious; to sell them for less than fifteen dollars would indeed be absolute ruin.'

J. Better leave him alone for a little while, and look at something else.

Five minutes elapse, during which time we are examining a variety of wood-carvings, porcelain, and lackered ware, apparently quite oblivious of the bronzes.

Merchant comes forward; he will take fourteen dollars.

P. Two; they are certainly worth no more.

M. (With another shrug) From *us*, will even take twelve dollars.

P. Well, I'll give you three.

M. Say ten, and close the bargain.

P. Once for all, then, four dollars.

Merchant cannot hear of such a sacrifice, so we leave him again to his own contemplations, and amuse ourselves by watching the passengers in the street. There is a Buddhist priest, with his shaven crown and long gray robes; he is treated with no particular reverence by the people; in fact, the power of the priesthood in China is not very great. Behind him comes an old man of venerable aspect, with a snow-white beard, and a miserable little wisp of gray tail, sticking over the collar of his rather greasy blue gown: in one hand he carries a pipe made of a slender bamboo, and by the other he leads a pretty little black-eyed boy, naked to the waist, his shining tail plaited with red silk. The child opens his large black eyes with astonishment at the sight of three 'outside barbarians,' and the old gentleman regards us with languid curiosity. We are speculating on the little goat-like feet of a poor woman who hobbles over the uneven pavement, supporting herself with a staff, when our merchant returns to the charge: 'Will you give eight dollars?'

P. Not a cent more than four.

Merchant shakes his head, and we prepare to leave the shop. Merchant follows us; he has thought better of it; he will sell for six dollars.

P. I don't mind giving you five.

M. Then it must be so; the vases are yours for five dollars.

The bargain is now concluded; and the merchant, who has made a large profit, and is perfectly satisfied, takes leave of us with great cordiality.

Time occupied in the transaction, about fifteen minutes and three quarters.

We bought a few more 'curios'—this same process of beating down having to be gone through with each shopkeeper, and for each article—and, after another stroll through the principal streets, resumed our chairs; J—— and I agreeing to start next day on a visit to the monastery of Cushan, our coolies set off at a rapid walk for home.

I was awaked next morning about sunrise by the discordant braying of trumpets and the roll of a drum, mingled with the sharp rattle of firearms. These sounds, I knew, indicated morning drill—there was a convenient open space near our house, often used for that purpose—and as I had never seen Chinese soldiers, I immediately turned out, and in a few minutes found myself a spectator of the review.

The soldiers were a most slovenly-looking troop, of all sizes, each dressed in a very dirty and sleeveless shirt—having embroidered on the back and breast a device including the word *Ping;* that is, soldier—and a pair of wide cotton trousers, not a whit cleaner than the other garment: this constituted the whole of the uniform, for they were shoeless and shakoless; their greasy tails twisted carelessly round heads that had not known the razor for many days. They were armed partly with firelocks, some of which were so large as to require two men for their management—namely, a *gun-carrier*, to support the piece on his shoulder, and a *gunner*, who stood behind to take aim and fire. Others carried a formidable-looking weapon like Neptune's trident, and the rest had swords or long-handled scythes, the blade set in a line, and not at an angle with the staff.

The soldiers were drawn up three deep on a level grass-plot; and on a rising ground to the right was stationed the band, composed of a drum and two long copper trumpets, each sounding a single hoarse note, but with the difference of an octave between the two instruments. The music was of a very simple character, being nothing more than a trial who should beat, or blow fastest and loudest. The mandarin in command sat on a chair in front of the line. The exercises consisted of a series of sham-fights between two individuals at a time, each armed with the same kind of weapon. There was no display of skill in fence, but plenty of shouting, grimacing, and gesticulating, much in the sanguinary grotesque manner of melodramatic combats at our minor provincial theatres. Each weapon having been duly exhibited, a certain number of the men formed a square, bristling with scythes and pikes; while of the rest, some trotted round them, the remainder forming another circle outside these, and trotting in the opposite direction: in fact, they joined in a kind of war-dance, and this derived a great deal of effect from yelling and prancing *ad libitum*, which was no doubt intended to strike terror into the hearts of the enemy. At one part of the course, the leader shook his trident, and gave a shout and a little jump, all which actions were imitated by each man in succession as he came to the same place: even thus has one seen a venerable bell-wether, at the head of a flock of silly sheep in full race from some predatory Newfoundland, shake his massive front, and bound, as it were, over an imaginary fence: each trusting follower repeats the leap, and that little spot of ground is avoided by every foot, as though a crimson drop from the butcher's horrid knife had fallen there, and the place were accursed. But the evolutions being brought too suddenly to a close, the men fell into confusion; one ran on, and another ran against him; a third checked a ferocious yell that was rising to his lips; and the rest huddled together, and stood still. The commanding-officer hesitated, the drummer shouted the proper order, for he evidently understood the state of affairs; but then he was only a drummer. Could a commanding-officer take advice from *him?* What is to be done? Is this mandarin really unequal to this emergency? No, the momentary hesitation is past; a brilliant idea has struck him; he leaps from his chair, seizes the man nearest him by the tail, just where it joins the back of the neck, and administers three or four severe kicks! The effect was like magic; order was at once restored; the officer calmly resumed his seat, and after a little more manœuvring, ending with a murderous fusilade, the parade was over; each man departed to his own home, without doubt, thoroughly convinced of the irresistibility of Celestial arms. I know not whether these were veterans or raw recruits, for this parade was my only experience in the Chinese art-military. W—— (who was my host) put his larder and cellar at my command, that we might not want for provender on the trip to Cushan; but J—— had undertaken the 'chow-chow' department; so, empty handed, I called for him at half-past five in the afternoon, for we had determined to start at sunset, in order to avoid the heat of the day.

We embarked in a *sampan*, freighted with two bamboo open chairs, six bearers for the same, and a chow-chow basket; J—— armed with a most formidable-looking bowie-knife, and the present writer with a pilgrim's staff, which he trusted it would be necessary to put to no other than its legitimate use.

A few miles down the river, we landed at the foot of the Cushan mountain, on a wild-looking plain, half-marsh, half-paddy, and intersected by numerous creeks and small canals. It was a lovely evening; the light breeze, and cool sky—star-spangled, and illumined by fitful flashes of the silent summer lightning—and the wild freedom of the scene, inexpressibly exhilarating, after a glowing day in a close, dirty Chinese suburb. So we mounted our chairs, in excellent spirits, and started off, on the shoulders of our coolies, fine muscular fellows; their brown, weather-beaten bodies quite untrammelled by unnecessary clothing. On our way to the mountain-foot, we had to cross a creek, thigh-deep in mingled mud and water, and a perilous bridge of considerable length, high, parapetless, and three bamboos in breadth: here I declined being carried, preferring the risk of being buried in the soft black mud, on my own responsibility. After surmounting these difficulties, we passed through a village, where we were saluted with a shout of welcome, followed by a shower of pebbles, which we thought it wise to wink at; the first, or almost the first piece of incivility I have met with in China. But our bearers kept up a steady pace, and soon left the impudent young villagers behind: having passed through a wide and venerable gateway, to which was attached a small house or chapel, we commenced the ascent of the mountain. This is made by an endless flight of broad, rough granite steps, passing through lofty pine-woods, dark as night, save where the fire-flies flit, or where the moon pierces the solemn foliage, casting her beams far below on the glittering water at the bottom of a deep rocky dell that descends precipitously on our left. There is no sight nor sound of man; but nature is not asleep, for the fire-flies dance to the music of myriads of crickets, and other night-insects; the distant roar of a million frogs ascends from the plain below, and this anthem for many voices is accompanied by the gentle, monotonous murmuring of the little 'burnie' in the glen. There is no stir nor rustle of leaves, for it is but a breath that fans us.

About nine o'clock, being tired of alternately walking and being carried up stairs—the long elastic bamboo poles allowing our chairs to swing about in an unpleasant manner—and, moreover, having had no dinner, we stopped to examine the contents of the chow-chow basket.

J—— was on this occasion a bad caterer, for the sandwiches he had provided proved to be made of sour bread, and were given to the coolies, who seemed to find no fault in them, and we ourselves were reduced to 'crackers' (Anglicé, biscuits), a pot of anchovy paste, two bottles of beer, and two of claret. The drinkables were undeniably excellent; but, alas! a valuable bottle of 'Bass' came to an untimely end—it was wounded on a sharp stone, and bled to death. However, we sat down on a rock—still quite hot to the touch, although the sun had set several hours—and made a tolerable supper of biscuits and St Julien.

We then rose refreshed, and with the eternal cheroot in our mouths, resumed our journey. But our progress 'up stairs' was abruptly interrupted by a broad massive door belonging to a small joshouse, that was built exactly in the path, no doubt for the convenience of the excellent monks levying toll on all pilgrims and devotees; for, there being a deep precipice on the left, and an insurmountable acclivity on the right, to pass otherwise than through this joshouse was impossible. After a good deal of knocking, we were admitted into a small court by an ancient priest, who seemed to be the only inhabitant of the place. He invited us into the temple, brought us tea, which we drank in the presence of three grim graven images, and of course begged an alms; for these holy men are ever ready to relieve us sinners of the burden of filthy lucre. We presented the old gentleman with 200 cash (about 1s. 4d.), and departed—no doubt, with his blessing.

After this, the ascent became less steep, and the granite steps gradually subsided into a tolerably level path, which, about half-past ten, brought us to the convent.

The convent is a large one-storied building, covering a considerable space of ground, and no doubt several centuries old; but the actual date I could not learn. It is situated on a broad shoulder of the mountain, bordered by woods, but leaving a wide grassy lawn, enclosing three sides of the building, which is backed by a steep ascent. The principal entrance is approached by a broad inclined plain of granite, answering the purpose of a flight of steps, and which has a handsome appearance.

Having ascended to the gate, we knocked; and after a long and clamorous salutation from all the curs on the premises, we were admitted by a young monk, and conducted—through several passages and open courts surrounded by buildings, one-storied, and with the heavy gabled roof, most common in Chinese architecture—to the reception-room.

This room is lofty and spacious, but bare of furniture, except a table, a few benches, and, at the upper end, a small dais, for the accommodation of guests of distinction.

The fathers, simple-looking fellows, with long light-gray robes and shaven heads—it is only the laymen who wear tails—invited us to be seated, and of course presented us with tea. They then continued to stare at us good-humouredly, and to examine with interest the various possessions we had left on the table, and particularly J——'s bowie-knife; as for my pilgrim's staff, it attracted small attention. Luckily, one of the monks spoke the Mandarin language, which was a great relief to Mr J——, whose Fo-kien was hardly strong enough to sustain a lengthened conversation. From this man we learned that an American missionary was then living at the monastery, but it was too late for us to visit him that evening; so we asked for our sleeping-place, and were shewn into a small room on the right of the reception-room. Our bed-chamber was very clean, and contained exactly enough of chairs and tables for our use, namely, two of the former, and one of the latter; and of beds, one too many—that is, three, hung with green silk curtains, and each furnished with a straw mat, and a wooden pillow painted red and varnished. Here we passed the night until daylight; but, for my part, without much sleep, for—to say nothing of the mosquitoes, which were sufficiently annoying, the weather being too warm for silken curtains—there was in the great temple a certain deep-toned gong that at intervals of three or four minutes was struck by a monk whose duty it was to watch in the temple—the solemn bang, bang, bang sounding to every part of the building. This incessant gong-beating is intended, I fancy, to keep the gods, or perhaps the watchman, awake; I can answer for its having had that effect on the traveller.

The Chinese seem to put great faith in noise. The house-watchmen clatter two hollow bamboos together, or gingle a miserable cracked bell, for about three minutes out of every fifteen during the night. In the seaport towns, never a junk weighs anchor, or returns from a voyage, but half the vessels in the harbour must salute her with a furious clashing of gongs, which compliment is returned by a man who stands in the bow, and seems absolutely to throw his whole soul into the gong-stick. The noise of fireworks is as common in China as the croaking of frogs; but if, dear reader, you should ever sleep (!) in a Chinese town, on the night of a great festival, may Heaven help you to patience! It is impossible to describe the din of crackers, gongs, and every kind of infernal musical instrument, accompanied by singing, shouting, howling—sounds, indeed, that I do not think there is any English word to express; and this concert only ceases at the appearance of daylight! To add to your happiness, your servants, next day, are sleepy and stupid, too late for breakfast, and overdoing your omelet, about which you are very particular; for, of course, *they* joined the revellers as soon as master had gone to bed; and let us hope they enjoyed themselves.

We rose betimes, and started for a climb to the summit of the Cushan. The ascent is steep, the first part through trees, and afterwards over rocks and thin, rusty-looking grass; but even at this height, a few miserable patches of cultivation are visible. The view of the wide and rich valley of the Min, the river winding through it like a silver thread, is glorious!

On our return, we spent some time in exploring the various chapels of the convent. In the great temple there is a colossal gilded statue of Buddha, representing a jolly, middle-aged person, very fat, and in the enjoyment of a hearty laugh: he is seated *à la Turc*, a heavy drapery falling from his shoulders, and covering his feet and limbs, but leaving the breast and stomach bare. The head is good and benevolent, although sensuality is strongly expressed in the lower part of the face, and in the obesity of the figure. On each side of Buddha are two colossal images, which, from the ferocity of their aspect, I took to be gods of war; they are armed, and each of the eight feet is supported by a little devil, apparently suffering great mental or physical agony. In a large chapel we found a group of grim-looking saints, seated in two rows opposite each other. These, to judge from their appearance, might be portraits; they are very well executed, the size of life, and covered with gilding. Many more images, small and great, and all painted and gilded, are scattered over the various buildings. I must not forget to mention that we were gratified by a sight of the great gong. May its sound never be less!

After breakfasting on our biscuits and claret—for, although the monks have fowls, eggs, and fish, they are sacred, and cannot be bought for dollars—we received a visit from the American missionary, Mr G——. With him we went to the library, apparently valuable, and in good condition; the monks brought out two or three of the books, to shew us the drawings they contained. These were principally portraits, and appeared to afford the fathers a good deal of entertainment; but as for the Sanscrit manuscript, I believe it was as unintelligible to them as to us. According to Mr G——, the monks are very ignorant, very superstitious, and at the same time very irreverent. Superstitious fear is enough to prevent them neglecting the routine of religious observance; but they repeat their Sanscrit services by rote, without intelligence, and—as we saw in a small chapel near the library—in a sing-song manner, with eyes half shut, and moving the body backwards and forwards in time to the beating of a small tom-tom or hollow bamboo.

We had to produce money before we were allowed to see the great relic, which was carefully shut up in a carved and gilded cabinet, only opened after the burning of several incense-sticks, at one of which J—— lighted his cheroot. But this wicked levity of conduct did not seem to scandalise the priests; they quietly threw open the doors of the shrine, and displayed a venerable grinder, which had once occupied an honourable place in the mouth of Buddha himself! And, in sooth, Buddha must have been quite as large as his image in the temple, for this tooth was, in size, form, and colour, identical with a tooth from the jaws of that wisest of beasts, the elephant.

We could not go without seeing the sacred fish, which did us the honour to eat the rest of our biscuits, and a gong, beaten at regular intervals, by water-power, of which the fathers seem very proud.

Then, having presented our friends, the monks, with a certain number of dollars, to be expended in charity—to themselves or others—we bade farewell to them, and to Mr G——, and commenced the descent of the mountain.

On our way, we met two closely shut sedan-chairs, followed by a small party of attendants, no doubt conveying devotees of distinction to the convent. Behind them came a miserable beggar, toiling up the hot granite steps; he prostrated himself before us, which rather disgusted our English self-respect, but elicited an alms nevertheless. We found our boat waiting where we had left it the night before, and arrived in Fou-tchow at 2 o'clock P.M., not a little wearied by our morning's work, and the intolerable heat of the weather, for we were almost panting for breath under the fierce sun, which paid but small respect to our boat-awning. But a very light breakfast, followed by a dinner of 'crackers' and St Julien, had left us a splendid appetite, and all our fatigues were forgotten in the exhilarating sight of *tiffin!*

THE ECONOMY OF SIGHT.

It was Dr Johnson, we think, who expressed his surprise that the inventor of spectacles was regarded with indifference, and found no biographer to celebrate his deeds. Deeds, however, there are none to celebrate; his very name is doubtful, and his life a blank. His invention is his history, and a history which merits attention for the information it conveys, though it is now too late to confer honour on the assemblage of letters which form the words Salvino and Spina.

A monk, named Rivalto, in a sermon preached at Florence in 1305, says that spectacles had then been known about twenty years. This would place the invention in the year 1285, which coincides with the period when the reputed rivals for the honour flourished. Popular opinion has pronounced in favour of Spina. His opponents allege that the very passage of the monkish chronicle on which alone his pretensions rest, is fatal to the claim. It is there stated that another person, who is not named, had been before him in the discovery; but on his telling the result, and refusing to divulge the means, Spina divined the secret, and proclaimed it to the world. An Italian antiquary found, in a manuscript in his possession, an epitaph which records that one Salvino, who died in 1318, was 'inventor degl' occhiali.' The testimony would have been strong if the epitaph had existed in the original marble, but the private manuscript of an antiquarian collector often proves nothing except the credulity of the owner. There is no evidence, however, to forbid the notion that Salvino was the selfish predecessor who felt an additional satisfaction in seeing because nobody else in need of his invention would be able to see. The circumstance detracts little from Spina's originality, and not the least from his title to the gratitude of mankind. If it be granted that Spina was indebted to Salvino for the hint, the world are indebted to Spina for the spectacles.

A few sentences will explain how spectacles assist the sight. The minutest point of an illuminated object darts out rays in every direction, which diverge like the spokes from the nave of a wheel, and strike the eye through the whole extent of its outer surface; or, to speak with more exactness, the light assumes the form of a cone, the point of the object being the apex, and the eye the base. What is true of one point, is true of all. Millions of points are each discharging its cone of light upon the eye, which, before it can become a perceiving organ, must be able to disentangle the jarring rays, and reduce them to order. A property of light is to bend on entering a new substance that is either rarer or denser than what was previously traversed. By virtue of the difference between the parts of the eye, and the eye and the atmosphere, all the rays from the same point of the object without are gathered together in a bundle by themselves till they once more meet in a point within. The action of the eye is simply to reverse the previous effect. The spreading light is again drawn close, and becomes at the goal what it was at the starting-place. Yet it is not enough that a picture should be formed; it must be painted on the retina at the back of the eye; and if the rays are brought together before or behind, instead of upon it, the sight is confused. This is the evil which spectacles correct.

In advancing years, the eyes lose a part of their bending power, for the ball and crystalline lens get flatter, and their globular shape has a principal share in producing the effect. The rays are not drawn inwards with sufficient force, and arrive at the retina before they can meet in a point. A curved glass operates upon light like the eye itself, and, interposed before it, does a portion of its work. The rays are bent in passing through the glass, and the eye, which was incompetent to the entire task, is able to complete what the glass begins. When the organ is nearly equal to its duty, a slight curvature, just enough to make good the deficiency, is given to the spectacles, and as the eye fails, their rotundity is increased—an exact proportion being thus kept up between the demand of nature and the supply of art.

Though near objects require spectacles to shew them distinctly, those more distant may be seen in perfection without their assistance. Since the rays from a point keep separating as they travel, all which branch out widely are soon too far asunder to fall within the narrow circle of the eye. The least divergent alone hit it, and these are the easiest reduced to union; but an eye brought close to the object catches the divergent rays at their source, and if its capabilities are diminished, is unable to master them. Here spectacles are a necessary aid, while the lesser task is readily performed by the naked eye. One of the earliest indications of an alteration in the sight is the holding a book further off than before, to get rid of the unmanageable part of the light.

Some eyes, which are over-round, refract the rays in excess, and bring them to a focus in front of the retina: the result is, shortness of sight. The eye must come nearer to what it wants to distinguish, and imbibe those spreading rays, which demand an additional bending equal to its own superfluity of power. Hollowed or concave glasses obviate the need for greater proximity. As round or convex spectacles draw in the rays, so these turn them out till their increased divergence is equivalent to the superior force of the eye. Thus, spectacles are a remedy for opposite defects. One sees obscurely what is under his nose, another is blind to all that is not; and a glass gives the mole the range of the eagle, and suffers the eagle to confine its vision like the mole.

But in careless hands, a tool becomes a weapon; and even spectacles worn, before they are required, deteriorate the sight they were meant to restore. By some mechanism, which as yet is imperfectly understood, the eye alters its conformation for every distance, in order that the bending, or, in technical language, the refracting power, may vary with the work. This capacity of change is dependent upon habit. A student seldom sees well at a distance, for his eyes are exercised upon near objects, and get fixed in the shape which they commonly assume. With a sailor, it is the reverse: he is for ever striving to penetrate into space, and at last sees more of the horizon than his hand. The same process is carried on in a vigorous eye when forced into harmony with the new refractions which glasses produce. It takes and retains a fresh bias, which encroaches on the resources reserved for the wants of future years. Soldiers, who used to exhaust ingenuity to procure their discharge, discovered that straining their eyes to distinguish objects through concave glasses would make them what they desired—too short-sighted for the service. If they marred their vision, they recovered their liberty; but the tyranny of fashion has wrought greater havoc than military servitude, and could offer nothing in return except present self-conceit and future regrets. A few years previous to the appearance of the *Tatler*, the public were seized with this ambition of seeming not to see. The eye-disease was more contagious than the plague. Acquaintances deemed it essential to their personal importance to withhold their mutual recognition till they had narrowly examined each other through a glass. 'However,' writes Steele, 'that infirmity is out of favour, and the age has regained its sight.' But the age continues to lose it periodically, and has been blind within the memory of the present generation. When the mania returns—as return it will with some revolution of the moon—those liable to be infected would do well to consider whether, for the sake of being ridiculed by men of sense in their youth, it is worth their while to be purblind in their prime.

Though the malady is only epidemic at intervals, it never quite disappears. Whether it be a peculiarity of the medical profession to imbibe the wisdom by aping the infirmities of age, or that they see further into a case the less they can see of anything else, the delusion is common with the junior brethren of the craft, that spectacles make the physician, and procure the money which makes the man.

There are others, with eyes unimpaired by time, who, deceived by the aid which glasses afford to less fortunate coevals, expect a cure where there is no disease. To customers difficult to suit, the celebrated Ramsden presented spectacles fitted with common glass, and in the blandest accents told them they were the species adapted to their case. An exclamation of delight invariably followed: 'Ay, these will do—these are capital!' But that part of mankind who wear spectacles for use, and not for show, and always have them of an actual power, must beware of inferring the decay of sight from the lapse of years. Ramsden said he had a harder task to persuade favoured mortals that their sight was good than to cure defects where it was really bad. A lady who, at seventy-nine, could thread a needle with the naked eye, complained that nature had debarred her of a privilege. 'My acquaintances are always telling me how charmingly they can read and work with glasses, and surely it is very hard that *I* cannot enjoy the same advantage.'

Those who are ashamed to grow old, and think a badge of infirmity a badge of disgrace, take the other extreme. How they see, is entirely subordinate to how they look. But Time leaves his footmarks wherever he treads. The ocular exertion which instinct prompts, betrays at once their weak ambition and their waning sight. Their eyes and their minds are in strict keeping, for self-conceit is the blindest of passions; and while exulting in its work, withers by its touch every garland it attempts to weave. When the question lies between vanity and spectacles, it should be easy to decide which of the two is the most valuable possession. Prudence induces many to prolong the contest, convinced that the years which are snatched from the reign of spectacles are so much added to the duration of vision. The contrary is the truth, if the eyes are strained. The art which preserves them from unnatural efforts husbands their strength. Borrowed aid here is better than bankruptcy, and bankruptcy is best averted by not exhausting common resources before the extraordinary are called in.

Nothing is more variable in the constitution of man than the age at which near objects first appear confused. Dr Johnson, blind in one eye and purblind in the other, dispensed with a glass to the close of his life; and the celebrated preacher Romaine read, unspectacled, small print in his eightieth year. Nature doles out privileges like these with a sparing hand. The greater part of mankind require assistance by forty-five; yet most at this age are taken by surprise, and seldom at the outset suspect the evil. The first symptoms occurring by candle-light—which is much less efficient than the light of day—the dim-eyed man complains to the chandler, when he should go to the optician. But when repeated changes of lamps and candles, and numberless manœuvres with the wick, produce no relief, when he finds that his family are in a glare, while he himself is in a mist, he begins to remember that he is older than he was, and that there is nothing which time favours less than eyes. He purchases spectacles, and is delighted with the acquisition. The haze is dissipated, and he seems to gaze upon a renovated world. Often, at no long interval, objects recommence to lose their brightness; a light film is spreading itself afresh; and that he may brush it away, he alternately rubs his spectacles and his eyes. The operation is unsuccessful. The dusky hue which hangs upon the scene is not to be treated like a time-soiled picture; and, warned by experience, he immediately traces the evil to its source. He calls again at his optician's, and asks for spectacles of a higher power; the pleasure is renewed, and the disappointment follows. He is now alarmed at his vision advancing by such rapid stages to the realms of darkness; and as he is long past the confines of unassisted nature, he fears to be soon beyond the reach of art.

This is an extreme example of what generally happens in a less degree. The effect of spectacles diminishes with use, and offers a temptation to hasten the change from focus to focus, till art and nature are both run out. A confusion of the letters in reading or writing gives warning of the necessity for older glasses. The same focus will often serve for several years, and fortunate is the man who lives to wear the series to an end; whereas spendthrifts of sight must be prepared to put on their last glasses, for the last time, long before their eyes are closed in death.

The point settled that spectacles are required, the next consideration is to choose them with judgment. Many have no idea that it is requisite to choose at all. They disinter from the buried effects of the last generation a pair of family spectacles; and the older was the ancestor who wore them, and the dimmer were his eyes, the greater, they suppose, must be the virtue of the glasses which enabled him to see. But to begin where grandfathers and grandmothers left off, is to put twenty or thirty years upon the eyes in a short six months. The selection should be made by trials in the shop of the optician, and the lowest power taken which shews the work for which they are intended at the ordinary distance. The divergent rays of an object held closer, call for stronger refraction to unite them on the retina, and may lead to the choice of a higher power, or to the adoption of spectacles where none are required. Whoever makes [illegible] mistake, buys a master instead of a servant; his eyes will be tyrannised over by his spectacles, and be worn out in their service.

The novice expects the glasses which enable him [illegible] read will be equally good for an extended view. [illegible] glances from his book down the street, and exclaims that what brightens the page darkens the prospect. A glass cannot change its form like the eye; if it [illegible] power enough for a small distance, it will over-refract the rays from a greater. 'An' two men ride [illegible] horse,' says Dogberry, 'one must ride behind.' Forensic spectacles, which originated, as the [illegible] denotes, in the courts of law, have the upper [illegible] pared down to a straight line, and the counsel, by lowering his eyes, looks through the glass at his brief, and, by raising them, looks at his audience over the edge. To a bystander he appears as if at one time he saw with half a pair of spectacles, and at another with half an eye. The arrangement is most useful in securing clear sight at variable distances, and permits the gaze to be averted at intervals from the glass, which adds the minor comfort of a cool eye to the commanding advantage of a cool head. Nor is the benefit less in the study than in court. By the adoption of forensic spectacles in reading and writing, the heated organ gets refreshed in the casual pauses of thought, without shifting the machine and interrupting the employment.

When not engaged upon near work, the economist of sight will look about him with a free eye; and if an impenetrable mist should gather, he must have a second pair of spectacles, less powerful than the companions of his sedentary hours. At present, he has only to ascertain that both eyes are equally well at a single distance, or whether one does not require a different focus from the other. If the page be looked at alternately with each, any variation in the effect will be immediately perceptible, and the two compartments can be fitted with glasses of varying power. It is common, though we are unconscious of it, for the eyes to wear unevenly; the left lags behind, and leaves his fellow to perform the work. All who use a single glass, and always apply it to the same side—especially artisans who, like watchmakers, pass hours in this position—are in a particular manner exposed to the defect. The idle eye, enervated and not preserved by indolence, is sure to be the worst. Moderate action is essential to the health of every part of the body; and the dislocation of a limb upon the rack would not be more destructive than protracted repose. Both methods are tried upon the eyes—the right is racked with labour, and the left is depraved with ease. A practice which is universal among those who are compelled to employ a single eye at a time, must be supposed to possess an undoubted advantage, or it would seem a simple resource to work each by turns.

The right focus found, it is necessary to ascertain that the centre of the glass is directly opposite to the centre of the pupil. Though the width between the eyes is far from uniform, little attention is paid to the circumstance. There is not less reason that the frames of spectacles should be adapted to the face, than that a hat should be fitted to the size of the head. The inconvenience of glasses which are not precisely in front of the eyes, will be quickly felt; but the cause of the inconvenience may remain long undetected. The aching sensation is a common consequence of using spectacles at first; and possessed of this knowledge, the wearer continues both figuratively and literally to wink at the fault. The remaining points of importance are soon decided. To see that the glass is without a speck or a vein, it has only to be held before the flame of a candle; to learn that the substance is uniform, and the shape exact, it suffices to ascertain that in raising the spectacles from a book towards the eyes, none of the letters appear distorted; and both the lenses will be known to be of one focus, if the effect is the same when they are looked through in succession with the same eye. The best form for the glasses is the common double convex for long sight, and the double concave for short. Periscopic spectacles, the contrivance of Dr Wollaston, shew a wider prospect—an advantage which can be equally gained by a turn of the head—and shew it less perfectly, which is a serious evil, that admits no relief. Of the numberless other inventions which are for ever being thrust before the eyes of the public, it is needless to speak. Mr Adams, an optician of the last century, and the author of an excellent treatise on his art, ascribed them to a craving for extensive business. What is new is seldom much more than a Greek name, of which the learned look and lofty sound may sometimes impose upon those who know nothing but English, and lead them to believe that the term implies a multitude of recondite virtues which it defied the poverty of their mother-tongue to express.

Better to shun the bait than struggle in the snare.

Every one must feel it an unsatisfactory thing if he goes to buy spectacles and has dust thrown in his eyes by the optician. For the rest, pebbles are dearer than glass, without being better, except that they are difficult to break and scratch; the mounting is a matter of taste, and not of science; all that is needed besides is health to wear the spectacles and money to pay for them—particulars in which it is beyond our power to afford assistance.

THE HEAD OF MY PROFESSION.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

At Brussels, the game began. There were hundreds of wealthy Englishmen there, and there were the usual number of sharks of all nations assembled to prey upon them. I was well received, and was, I believe, set down in many a private memorandum as a pigeon easy to be plucked. Crannel managed his affairs with consummate address. He gave the signal for me to lose almost constantly, day after day, even when I knew that he had heavy bets depending on my play, and though he had to pay my own losses as well as his. I could not understand it, and one night, after a repetition of the enigma, begged an explanation. He then informed me that the supposed losses he had endured were to confederates—the real ones being my own small stakes—and that I should see the result of this policy very soon. He was right in his prophecy. The confederates, who seemed to have won so much, excited the cupidity of others, and they having staked large sums, the signals suddenly changed, and I had to win. By what appeared the wildest and most fatuous play, I won game after game, which the most suspicious could only attribute to accident or the most unheard-of luck. The losers doubled their stakes, and lost again—and now, in lieu of the feigned thousands lost, the solid thousands poured in. So artfully did my patron control his greed, resigning even large sums when it was policy to do so, that no symptom of mistrust appeared; and for several weeks he went on reaping the golden harvest.

Suddenly, he announced his intention of starting for Berlin, and requested me to give my valet the necessary orders, to call in my accounts and settle them, for we should depart in twenty-four hours. I could not understand the reason, as he had certainly netted some thousands where we were, and might easily have doubled his gains. I was unwilling to move further, for I had formed some most agreeable acquaintances, and was already beginning to feel so much at home in the character I personated, as to forget the realities of my lot. I told him what were my feelings.

'That,' said he coolly, 'is the reason why we quit. Had you kept yourself more aloof, and formed no such close intimacies, we might have done well here for another month; but you have forgotten yourself, and imagine that you are something besides my servant.'

It was true—I had forgotten, and the reproof was just; but I hated him for making it, and was profoundly indignant at seeing that, spite of the gains I had brought him, he regarded me as a mere tool. I held my peace, however, complied with his orders, and the next day was on the road to Berlin, whither he followed me in a few days.

At Berlin, my valet, who was a creature of Crannel's, engaged a suite of apartments under the Lindens, where we awaited his coming. He came in due course, and the game was renewed under similar circumstances, and resulting in similar gains to my proprietor. We stayed in the Prussian capital over two months, during which time I was received in the best society, where, however, I could no longer feel at home, from the consciousness that I was debarred from private friendships. Here my first quarter's salary became due, and Crannel paid me the L.75, in terms of the contract, taking a receipt for the same. It may seem odd to the reader, who knows that a few months before I was contentedly working for journeyman's wages, that I felt intensely dissatisfied with my pay; but he who knows anything of the phenomena of a gamester's mind will readily believe that such was the case. In truth, I looked upon Crannel as a plundering scoundrel who had entrapped me in his meshes, and was robbing me wholesale of the fruits of my own talents. I conceived that I had at least an equal right with himself to my winnings—and I began daily to hate the sight of his long, stolid visage, and the piercing eye, from whose glance I could never be rid.

I need not recount the history of our wanderings and our well-timed visits to the various gambling centres of the European kingdoms. Be it enough to say that I was the tool of this Old Man of the Mountain for two years, during which time he had made large periodical remittances to his London banker. At the end of that period we sailed from Naples for Marseille, and entered France.

Though Crannel must, almost from the commencement of our connection, have been quite aware of my feelings regarding him, he had never thought fit to manifest any consciousness that such was the case. He had scrupulously performed his part of the contract—paying my salary to the day, and defraying all the expenses of the expedition. On my part, I had given him no cause of complaint, feeling too well that I was in his power; but that I thoroughly hated and detested him, he knew as well as possible. Perhaps it was with some idea of appeasing my hatred that he informed me, as we were approaching the French capital, that it was his intention to double my salary this third year, if I answered his expectations.

'And what are they?' I asked curtly.

'Increased caution and self-restraint,' he said. 'Paris is the grand field of operations. I should have taken you there at once, had you been seven years older; the two years' experience you have had elsewhere should have taught you the value of reserve. If you have learned that, we shall do well; if not, we shall be soon blown, and success will be doubtful.'

I knew what he meant, and, for my own sake, I treasured the hint, though I made some ungracious reply.

At Paris, my valet, according to his instructions, took apartments in the Champs Elysées, and hired me a handsome brougham. Instead of first frequenting the gambling-rooms, I allowed myself to be enticed thither by others. I pretended to know only the English game, and for some time would play no other. Then I grew fanatic for the French game, and learned that, and played it with all the airs of a novice, losing generally, and winning *by accident* when my patron gave the signal. He had now several confederates, his creatures, who played into his hands, and shared his gains, which at times were beyond all former precedent. When my salary became due, he doubled it according to his promise, without any expression of gratitude on my part, and the absence of which did not appear to surprise him in the least.

The position I had assumed in Paris enabled me to keep aloof from the gambling crowd, and materially helped him in carrying out his plans. An act of imprudence of mine, however, at this time, almost entirely defeated them, and altered the complexion of his schemes.

One morning, while lounging along the Boulevards, and peering into the shops for some new fashions—I had become an arrant fop by this time—I stumbled suddenly upon my old Bath friend and quondam schoolfellow, Ned B——. He was overjoyed beyond expression to see me, and, as it very soon appeared, not without reason. I saw, the moment our greeting was over, that he was striving with the blue-devils, and getting the worst of the strife, and I naturally inquired what was the nature of his grievance.

He replied with a groan and an ejaculation of thankfulness at having fallen in with me. Then seizing me by the arm, he lugged me off into a private room of a neighbouring *estaminet*, and, bolting the door, began his tale of woe. The burden of the whole was, that he had fallen into the hands of a cunning professor of our common craft, whom he had mistaken for a pigeon, and who, according to the stereotyped system, had led him on by first allowing him to win—had turned the tables on him at the critical moment, and had on the night last past plundered him to the tune of four hundred sterling, promising him his revenge at the next meeting. B——'s eyes were opened now that it was too late, and his money nearly all gone. He saw his master in the wily Austrian, and was convinced that if he played again, it would be but to increase his losses. He was at his wits' end when he met me. I was the only man who could help him. Would I take his place that night—engage the Austrian, and win back the money?

I professed my readiness to do what I could, but I doubted whether his antagonist would be willing to play with a stranger for such sums as B—— had lost.

'There is no fear of that,' said B——; 'we can lead him into it easy enough. Will you come?'

I could not refuse, and therefore I despatched a note to Crannel, informing him that I had met an old friend, and should not be home till late. Early in the evening, B—— drove me across the water to an establishment near the Palais du Luxembourg, where we were admitted to a private room, and commenced playing together. At the hour appointed, the Austrian came in and took his seat. He was a young fellow about my own age, and not likely soon to penetrate the artifices in which I was now such an adept. Having lost a couple of games to B——, I handed him a note in payment, and declined playing again, on the ground that he was too strong for me; adding, that I would try a game or two with the stranger, if agreeable. The Austrian rose and expressed his willingness, if B—— would defer their engagement for a while. This was, of course, arranged, and we began to play. We began at eight in the evening, and left off about dawn: we began playing the silliest game imaginable on both sides, and left off like finished masters of the science, skilled in all the difficult refinements of which it is susceptible. I knew, before I had played an hour, the whole strength of my adversary, while he remained ignorant of mine almost to the close of the match. It was not till my friend had won back all his money, that I began to throw off my disguise. I then piqued my adversary by criticising his play, and so soured his temper, that he played worse. When all was over, he was cleaned out to the last franc, and B—— and I had a thousand francs each of clear gain. We parted in the glimmer of the morning, B—— giving him his card, and offering him his revenge whenever he chose to claim it.

When I reached home, I found Crannel there awaiting me. I saw that he was in a savage mood; and to irritate him still further, I made a boast of what I had been about. His mortification was evidently extreme; but he only bit his lips, and said little. As he doubtless foresaw, my exploit got wind, and the result was, that ere long my assumed disguise peeled off of itself, and I was known, in the gaming circles at least, for what I was. Crannel, of course, had to alter his policy, and content himself with the new state of things. Still, as his fiat determined every game I played, his gains were very considerable. For my part, I liked my new position far better; and for the first time, really enjoyed the excitements of a gambler's life. I was now backed against the first players in Paris; and when the signal was to win, I did so in such brilliant style, that my renown soon spread abroad, and I became the wonder of the gambling circles.

About the middle of August, there arose a rumour of a new star in the billiard world. This was a young Russian, who was said to have reaped the highest honours in St Petersburg, and to have beaten every opponent who had ventured to meet him. As usual, the most exaggerated reports were circulated regarding him; and he must have been a magician, working by enchantments, if half that was said were true. It was inevitable that I should be pitted against him. Everybody talked of this consummation, and was eager to bring it about. Crannel did not start any objection; and my admirers making up a considerable purse, the affair was decided on. The match was to come off in the Palais Royal by daylight, on the Sunday. I had never seen my opponent up to the hour of our meeting; and when, with Crannel, who had betted liberally on my side, I repaired to the spot, what was my astonishment in recognising in the renowned Russian my once shirtless antagonist, Pat Meagher, whom, as a lad, I had defeated at Bath. It is true he looked the Russian well in a pair of dark whiskers, and a Cossack moustache; and he talked Russ most glibly with a friend who accompanied him. Still, there was the unmistakable Irish face, and the undeniable brogue flavoured his Slavonic speech. I was glad to see that he did not recognise me; but I was determined to seek him out and have a private conference, if possible. In stripping for the match, after we had shaken hands, he dropped a card from his vest-pocket; in a moment, I had secreted it unobserved, and the contest began.

But for my previous knowledge of Meagher's play, and the points in which his strength lay, I might probably have been beaten, and that summarily. As it was, the contest was a succession of wary sparrings, in which nothing brilliant was either done or attempted. Had a drawn match been possible in billiards, this would have been drawn. It ended in my winning, through the failure of an almost impossible stroke which, at the last crisis, my adversary was compelled to attempt, and which left the game in my hands.

I was immensely pleased with this victory, on more accounts than one. I had not only gained reputation, but I had convinced myself that the quasi Russian was incapable, in the long-run, of holding his own against me. I had drawn him out, and taken his measure, and felt myself his master. Crannel, who never missed anything, had seen as much, and would doubtless make good capital of his discernment; while, on the other hand, the partisans of the Russian were confident in his superior play, which, they swore, an accident only had defeated.

The morning after the match, I rose early, and drove in a *fiacre* to the address on Meagher's card, which bore the inscription, 'Ivan Mearowitz, Hôtel de la Paix, Rue Richelieu.' It was one of those grim old hotels where you knock, and are let in by an invisible porter. A voice directed me to the second door '*au quatrième;*' and on sounding it with my knuckles, Pat, who was in bed, bawled out 'Entrez,' and I walked in. He was flustered at seeing me, and began stuttering apologies in three languages at once.

'Is it possible,' I said, 'that you did not know me yesterday, Pat?'

'Bedad,' said he, 'it must be possible, I reckon, for I don't know you now for anything but the man that bate me yesterday.'

'Don't you recollect me at Bath five years ago?'

'Whew! botheration—if I hadn't a presquintiment of something of the kind, I'm a Dutchman. That accounts for the milk in the cocoa-nuts. Oh, be the Vargin, but it 's meself that 's glad to see ye anyhow.'

'Well, and what have you been doing these years?'

'Och! won't I tell you all about it? But not here, not here, my frind. Faith, the divole incarnate 'll be here in a jiffy, and he mustn't see you. Do ye see that windy yander wid the green venaytians?' and Pat, rising from his bed, pointed across the court.

'I see it—what then?'

'Cross the coort, mount the tother stairs, and go into No. 15 on the third floore. I'll be wid ye in a twinklin.'

I did as he requested, feeling assured, from his eagerness and excitement, that some interesting revelation awaited me. In less than ten minutes he made his appearance in an old dressing-gown, and having bolted the door of the closet, which was but a receptacle for lumber, seated himself on a box, and commenced a rather remarkable monologue. I shall not give it in detail, out of consideration for the reader's patience. The gist of it may be briefly extracted, and was to the following effect: Like myself, Pat Meagher had been picked up by a speculating patron, and carried off to St Petersburg, where, according to his own account, he had won a mint of money for his owner, receiving but a miserable stipend for himself, and ungentlemanly treatment into the bargain. His tyrant was one Mortier, a cashiered French officer. Meagher assured me that he had won for him a hundred thousand rubles in St Petersburg, and as much more at Moscow—the villain coolly bagging the whole. Pat's hatred to the man was almost demoniac; and he seemed possessed with the idea that he should be driven to murder him before their contract was expired, and which had yet two years to run. My affection for Crannel, as the reader knows, was somewhat of the same stamp; and by way of consoling each other, we mutually anathematised the villains who had us in their grasp.

But Meagher was not content with cursing his enemy; he had a plan which he had long been revolving in his mind, and which his encounter with me would enable him to carry out: he proposed at once, and with an almost savage vehemence, that we should turn the tables upon our tyrants, and, as they had so long done by us, enrich ourselves at their expense. The thing could be easily done; we had only to get a clever confederate of our own, and then, disregarding the private signals of our patrons, sell them at the best price we could, by winning or losing to suit our own interests. The scheme struck me as excellent, as well from its simplicity as from the retributive justice it involved, and I agreed to it eagerly and at once.

'Then be here to-morrow,' said Pat, 'by seven in the morning; by that time, I shall have seen the right man, and, bedad, we'll work the oracle in future on our own account.'

Soon after seven next morning, Meagher and I were fleeing along the road to St Cloud, to the residence of M. Florian, who had entered into the scheme, and with whom we were to concert measures for putting it into execution. M. Florian was a model dandy of that era—of graceful figure, exquisite manners, and fine accomplishments—musician, artist, linguist, and gambler, the idol of the sex, and the most careless, agreeable, and good-humoured rattlepate in the world. He received us in an elegant saloon, hung with the masterly productions of his own pencil, sang us an operatic air to his own accompaniment, arranged our little plan on the simplest grounds and the most liberal terms, gave us his note of hand for a round sum to fall due in a few weeks, ordered up a grand *déjeûner*, and, that discussed, drove us as far back as Auteuil in his own carriage.

The reader may perhaps suspect that M. Florian was little to be relied on; if so, he is mistaken. The honour that exists among—ahem!—among gentlemen of certain pursuits, is as spotless as the snow, and is rarely violated. Pending the whole duration of our threefold contract, Florian behaved with the rectitude of a judge in ermine, and the precision of a banker.

Affairs now began to take a different course. The great billiard contest between the Russian and the Englishman was renewed almost nightly in the presence of the first amateurs of the capital. Agreeably to our plan, we both of us ignored the signals of our patrons whenever Florian gave any signal of his own, and thus turned the whole current of success into his treasury. Meanwhile, Florian played his game so adroitly, that he was rarely seen to win more than a trifle, and was seen as often to lose. This state of affairs had not continued long before Crannel began to look daggers at me whenever we met in private; and at length, not being able to refrain any longer, taxed me with treachery. I denied the charge, and insisted that he should pit me against some other antagonist; I could not be sure of the Russian, who was always developing new strength. My patron was evidently perplexed, and for a time he refrained from betting, but watched me, as I was well aware, all the closer. I had reason to suspect, moreover, that he had set spies upon my path when I went abroad, though what was the extent of his discoveries I never knew.

I saw Meagher but rarely in private, and then only at the hours before the dawn, when I could steal away from the observation of my prying valet, whose grog I had to dose more than once in order to prevent his watchfulness. Our scheme answered famously. We had divided five thousand pounds with Florian in three months, and vastly to the delight of Pat, most of it had come out of Mortier's pocket—and we were at last on the road to fortune. I am of opinion that if Crannel had not by this time some certain knowledge of our secret confederacy, he had at least so far verified his suspicions as to feel conscious that the contract by which he nominally retained my services was no longer of any advantage to him. But this double game was fast approaching to its end.

One night, Meagher's patron, Mortier, who came to the café where we played with the scowl of a fiend on his brow, and in a state of furious excitement, as was always the case when he drank freely, began to vociferate violently and to bet heavily on his protégé. M. Florian, who was present, immediately indicated that I was to win, and accepted all Mortier's proffered bets, in addition to those he had already made. It chanced that he had scarcely accepted these pledges, when one of those accidents, which are always contingent on the board of green cloth, and which the most experienced players cannot always guard against, gave Meagher such a decided advantage in the game as should, and would, under ordinary circumstances, have secured his winning it. Mortier now redoubled his clamour, and offered very heavy odds, challenging the whole room to accept them. Florian instantly did so, and they were accepted also by Crannel to a very unusually large amount. The game went on, and I recovered my lost ground so far that, as it drew towards the close, I had scored as many points as my opponent, and two points more scored by either of us would win the game. It was Meagher's turn to play, and his ball being under the cushion, he gave a miss, which, while it was the right play, was also good policy for us, since, had any accident sent one of the balls into the pocket, all would have been over. It was now my turn, and there was a winning hazard on the balls which at any other time I could have made with ease and certainty. Up to this moment of my life I had never known what it was to be nervous; but now, a panic fit seized me; the cue trembled in my hand: if I did not win, I knew that Florian would lose more than all three of us could pay. I essayed to make the stroke; but there were two hundred thousand francs depending upon it: I felt the eye of Crannel upon me, and every sinew in my frame vibrated. Calling for a glass of iced water, I drank it off, and then, endeavouring to think of something else, hastily struck the stroke. The red ball, instead of dropping into the pocket, struck the small angle of the cushion, rebounded, and kissed my own, the two then stopping, one on each side of the pocket, with a space between them barely wide enough for a ball to pass through. There were a hundred eyes looking on, but not a lip moved, only a suppressed groan arose for an instant among my partisans.

It was now Meagher's turn to play, and it was almost impossible for him to strike either ball without winning the game, in which case we were ruined. He did not seem at all disturbed, but lowered his cue to play. I thought he would take the only course open to him, and make a foul stroke; instead of that, he drove his ball sheer between the other two, without touching either of them, and ran a 'coo' in the pocket; thus losing the game.

Affecting the utmost horror at what he had done, he dashed down his cue, and began tearing his hair and blaspheming. I of course knew that he had done it on purpose; but the thing was so difficult, so apparently impossible, that the spectators did not suspect foul-play—none of them, with the exception of Mortier, who, having already his suspicions aroused, was now convinced of the justice of them, as well as enraged to madness at the heavy losses he had incurred. With a countenance livid with fury, he rushed towards Meagher, and yelling a desperate oath, dealt him a savage blow on the face.

A horrid scene ensued. The Irishman flew at the aggressor's throat, and would have strangled him on the spot but for the interference of a dozen strong arms, which tore him away. Frenzied beyond all control of himself, he burst out with a torrent o invective, abuse, and rabid curses, and leaping on the table, called heaven and earth to witne that he would not move thence alive without th heart's blood of the villain that had struck hi Mortier at first responded only by a sarcastic sne and turned his back upon him. But the Ir blood was not to be so appeased. Branding patron as coward, and heaping on him the fo charges, Meagher continued to denounce him robber, assassin, traitor, and *forçat;* and called the company to listen while he gave them veritable history of the monster.

Mortier, who had started at the word forçat, winced, and turning sharply round, 'Let us weapons,' he said; 'the fool shall have

Springing on the table, he folded his arms, and awaited the issue with a suppressed eagerness which shewed how deep should be his revenge.

Rapiers were brought: it was notified to both the combatants, that if either of them quitted the table, he would be instantly disarmed, held to be defeated, and incapable of resuming the strife. Then M. Florian drew a chalk-line across the centre of the cloth—the weapons were delivered to each, and the duel began.

Meagher, to whom the delay had afforded a moment for reflection, which he had wasted in fuming and stamping, advanced boldly to the encounter. Mortier, who was the shorter by nearly a head, instead of opposing him in the usual attitude, stood bent forward in a half-circle, with his rapier-point quivering above his head. Some rapid passes took place, and Mortier was seen to be bleeding from two slight wounds; but he was cool and wary in proportion to the peril—parried the deadly lunges of his tall foe with unvarying certainty, and at length, springing forward within his guard, instantly shortened his weapon, and thrust it sheer through the breast of the poor Irishman, who leaped with a wild cry into the air, and fell on the table a corpse.

Paralysed at the sight, I was gazing horror-struck at the lifeless body, when I felt a hand grasping my shoulder: it was Crannel. 'We must to cover,' he said; 'the police will be here in a minute, and you will gain nothing by their courtesies, you may depend upon it.'

That was the last game of billiards I ever played to the profit of Louis Crannel, who, at my request, paid me off the same night, giving me to understand that he knew I had played him false, but that having taken his measures accordingly, I had not injured him, though I had intended to do so. I reproached him in my turn with his systematic and cold-blooded rascality and selfishness—and we parted.

Mortier got a sentence of a year's imprisonment for the duel, one month of which he actually suffered. Poor Meagher was buried as a Russian officer, and was registered at Père la Chaise under the name of Mearowitz. M. Florian and I divided his effects between us, and I had seven thousand francs for my share of Mortier's losses, all of which were ultimately paid. How this sum and much more which I had gained over the devil's back was subsequently dissipated under another part of his person, it boots not the reader to know. Poverty, the ultimate lot of nearly all gamblers, has been mine for many a weary year. With mature age came dyspepsia and nervousness, and then all reliance on my skill as a billiard-player vanished. Of all accomplishments, this is the one that requires the most perfect condition of the physical faculties, and no man who is conscious that he possesses either nervous system or ventral organs, need expect to excel in it.

My confessions may well end here.

CHANCES FOR MAKING MONEY.

An American writer, Mr E. T. Freedley, has composed a work for the special edification of his countrymen on the art of making money—a subject on which one can imagine they stand in no need of advice. The title of his book, however, which we quote below,* points to a variety of branches of industry, abroad as well as at home, which seem to offer scope for the safe investment of capital; this important term, *safe*, being of course in all cases qualified by a reasonable amount of cautious inquiry; so, at the very threshold, as it were, we come back to the old homely maxim, that common sense, in which we include a fair share of skill, is, after all, the true guide to fortune.

Resorting to a large display of statistical explanations, our author, if not very ingenious and novel, at least spares no trouble in shewing us how, in certain kinds of mining, manufacturing, agricultural, and other operations, a man has good opportunities of realising wealth; the whole, according to his summing-up, amounting to as many as a thousand-and-ten chances of making money, provided people have the tact to know how to take advantage of them. Some of his 'chances,' it will be confessed, are sufficiently odd. One consists in 'discovering a new drink, pleasant, wholesome, and exhilarating, without being intoxicating,' in order to supersede the use of all alcholic liquors. We join in thinking that this is not a bad idea. Will any one, with some chemical knowledge, be so good as make a fortune by inventing some delightful drink—none of your sirupy or ginger-beery fluids—which, while satisfying temperance folks, will, to the bulk of mankind, take the place of wine, spirits, and malt liquors of all sorts? What a fortune that would be! Meanwhile, Mr, Freedley, with all his cleverness, fails to give the faintest hint how this grand discovery is to be made; but offers some consolation by telling us how Dr Schrieber, a Russian physician, has found out a means of curing habitual drunkenness. His process is very simple, and also somewhat droll. It consists in confining the drunkard in a room, and there supplying him with meat and drink, tinctured, in all cases, with his favourite spirit. If, for example, it be gin, you put gin in his tea, coffee, broth, water, every liquid he requires; you also saturate his bread, vegetables, and other varieties of food, with gin, till the poor wretch is driven half frantic with disgust, and he acquires such an utter detestation of spirits, that ever afterwards he is a miracle of temperance. All we can say is, that we have no faith in this Russian doctor's panacea. Talking of stimulants, Mr Freedley, whom our readers begin to suspect is a little credulous, bursts out with another famous chance of making a fortune. This is the discovery of some innocuous herb to be a substitute for tobacco. Hear him. 'It is no exaggeration to say that there are thousands of persons whose trembling nerves are anxiously awaiting the announcement of the discovery of a substitute for tobacco, which shall possess its agreeable properties, with none of its injurious effects.' Again, in this dearth of invention, he falls back on a useful piece of advice to money-seekers, as regards the preparation and sale of tobacco. 'Until a real substitute is discovered, there are a hundred chances to make money in putting up the genuine article in new shapes, with new colours, in new packages, with new names.' A chemist, it is added, recommends the use of glycerine in the manufacture; the chewing kind, in particular, being greatly improved by this admixture. We make our American friends welcome to this valuable discovery; likewise to the author's hint that a good thing could be made by growing poppies from which to extract opium for the Chinese market.

To those who have a fancy for agricultural enterprise, Mr Freedley points out the eligibility of an investment in land in the western states, vineyards in Ohio, cotton-planting in Texas, bamboo-growing in Florida, and finally sugar and coffee plantations in the West Indies. Referring to the deplorably deserted condition of estates in Jamaica, consequent on slave emancipation, he shews how thousands of acres of fine land could be bought for two or three shillings an acre; and, 'what is more extraordinary, a cultivated sugar-estate of two thousand acres was sold quite recently for 3000 dollars.' Stagnation being seemingly at its lowest point, the period has now arrived for investment. 'An improved estate of highly productive land, in an Italian climate, warm, but generally healthy, where harvesting and planting can go on throughout the year, can be purchased for less than the cost of an equal quantity of wild land in states covered with snow five months in the year. Coloured people are availing themselves of the opportunity, and becoming landowners in the West Indies—there being now in Jamaica alone, over *one hundred thousand Africans*, who own from three to five acres, and maintain themselves by cultivating them; but they have not the tools nor the requisite knowledge to render available the natural fertility of the soil. Looking thus solely at the chances for profit, and dismissing from the mind all considerations associated with a desirable residence, it is probable that a moderate fortune can be made as speedily in the West Indies as in the most favoured portion of the globe.' It is not without reason that the author subsequently qualifies his statement, by admitting that the great embarrassment in the West Indies is the scarcity of labourers; and this, of course, is the foundation of the whole circumstance. What signifies a fine estate, if it cannot be cultivated with a profit? Nor can we blame the free negroes of Jamaica for seeking good wages. When a man can live comfortably by lazily scratching a few acres, which are his own property, it would be strange to find him disposed to work for a low stipulated hire on all occasions that his assistance was required. What, in this connection, as an American would say, calls for notice, is the lamentable want of some plan, under reasonable guarantees, for introducing an abundance of free negro labour into the West Indies. England, with all its tact, does not seem to possess the skill to manage this important point, and consequently has the mortification of seeing some of its possessions literally going to the dogs. There are plenty refugee negroes in Canada, for the climate of which they are not well suited; why not induce them, if possible, to emigrate to the West Indies?

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* *Opportunities for Industry, and the Safe Investment of Capital.* By Edwin T. Freedley. London: Sampson Low & Co. 1859.

Respecting the riches which may be obtained by trading with China and other eastern countries, we must leave the curious in these matters to look over Mr Freedley's statements, which he seems to gather from all kinds of public reports and newspaper correspondence, without much regard to minute accuracy. We are reminded, however, of the useful piece of advice, that in dealing with the Chinese, there is no chance of becoming rich by trying to trick them into buying flimsy articles which will not wear; for they are just as clever at detecting frauds as certain American or English manufacturers are in perpetrating them. Quoting the observations of a correspondent of the *Times*, speculators are to remember that 'every morning, throughout the Chinese empire, there are three hundred millions of blue cotton breeches drawn over human legs; men, women, and children alike wear them.' What a chance of making money by supplying the demand for these indispensable garments! The Chinese will as readily buy imported as home-made apparel; what they want is a good bargain, something pretty according to their notions, but also substantial, and which is well worth the price demanded for it. Conducted honestly, we can see an immense opening for a profitable commerce with China. As an American, Mr Freedley looks to the prospect of a good trade in Yankee notions. China is to be a most important outlet for the manufactures of Connecticut. Any number of clocks and watches will be sold, provided they are adapted to Chinese horology. 'Cooke remarks that the highest ambition of a Chinaman is to have an English watch. He relates that a pirate, who had taken a missionary as a prisoner, but set him free, risked his life by calling on him next day at his house. He produced the reverend gentleman's watch, and the rightful owner thought that the repentant man had come to return it. Not so; the Cantonese pirate had come to beg the missionary to teach him how to wind up that watch.'

It is not an uncommon remark that money is now not so easily made as formerly; people, it is said, have all grown so clever, and so many channels towards success are occupied, that the chance of rising to fortune is becoming daily more slender. There is some plausibility in the remark. Steam-engines, locomotives, railways, and a hundred other magnificent things, have been invented, and cannot be invented again; and so far there is a difficulty. But, on the other hand, certain important qualifying circumstances need to be kept in mind. Within the last thirty years, the population is doubled, and the wants of everybody are proportionally increased. Comforts and luxuries are now in demand that were once never thought of. We cannot re-invent the railway, but look at what railways, and, we may add, steam-boats, are doing to extend the tastes and habits of refined society. In a sense, the world is only beginning to open shop. Countries long dormant are shaking themselves up, and taking part in the general activity. The shrewd author before us is quite aware of these facts. What with one kind of improvement and another, mankind, he says, are now 'for the first time ready to do business.' In the knowledge of how to set about taking an active part in remunerative undertakings, perhaps lies the true pinch. But education, if rightly conducted, should do something to relieve the difficulty. If you would be wise, and wish to put yourself in the way of fortune, you must read newspapers and periodicals, look sharply about to learn what the world is doing and looking for, what are great popular wants, what openings in new regions are taking place, and in particular, you must neither have any prejudice as to place, nor be afraid to lower your dignity by taking a hand in any enterprise, if it be honest, and of sufficient importance to warrant an expenditure of time and trouble. We would offer another hint, and that is the necessity of thinking for yourself. Do not go about worrying people for their advice on this or that line of life, or cackling as to what you propose to do, but ponder deeply, silently; and what your hand finds to do, do it with right good-will.

Notwithstanding all apparent obstacles, we hold that the greatest obstacle of all is one never thought of: we refer to the want of earnest purpose. A vast proportion of people in business and professions, are not in earnest, either as regards enterprise or the economising of means. Taking things easily, they are dainty where they ought to be energetic, hesitating where they should be prompt; the consequence being, that the energetic few walk into prosperity, while the dainty many are only dreaming of success. The contrast is often amusing. A man is seen carrying on a business languidly, and under the unpleasant impression that it is overdone, and that nothing can be made of it. You mention something to him by which he would make a good hit; but you have the old answer: 'There is a lion in the path.' Another person, less fastidious, however, has the shrewdness to see the matter in its true light, and he realises a great success—those who stand stupidly by saying it is all luck. Should we not also, in as delicate a way as possible, hint the too common failing of a want of integrity and candour in ordinary transactions. The recent insolvency of certain banks discloses a prevalence of dishonesty in high commercial quarters that is perfectly horrifying.

Nor can we think without pain on the almost universal practice among tradesmen of making false promises as to the execution of orders; truth, in such matters, being seemingly the exception, and not the rule. If people who habitually resort to these manœuvres, lose customers or stop short of brilliant success, who, we should ask, are to blame? Mr Freedley refers to the want of honesty as a serious drawback: 'In every settled county throughout the Union, there should be at least one person acting as middle-man between the inhabitants of that county and the publishers, merchants, and manufacturers of the cities, for the purpose of introducing new things that seem calculated to benefit his neighbours. The drawback to the successful prosecution of these kinds of agency-business hitherto, has been that so many of those who have undertaken it have been wanting in moral character and mercantile honesty—cheating by false representations those who buy from them, and defrauding those who intrust them with goods by not paying for them. A reliable, honest, persevering agent is always in demand; and if located in a populous district, he can accumulate his first thousand dollars with ease.'

Scrupulous honesty is thus an article in universal demand. With that to start with, the young and enterprising can scarcely fail in being successful, wherever civilised men are concentrated; though, let it be kept in view, that the making of money does not infer the keeping of it; and that, after all, he who would secure a fortune must necessarily resort to Franklin's well-known aphorism—'Spend less than thy clear gains.' No doubt, fortunes are sometimes made by a sudden dash; but dashing is as little to be recommended in general circumstances as a lazy and sham-genteel indifference. Ordinarily, there is no need to be in a hurry. The world is not going to run away. Endure privations with serenity, in order to insure future comfort. Take time, at least, to do things well, and by that means obtain a reputation that will, humanly speaking, lead to fortune. On this point, Freedley observes that 'the foundation of a fortune can be laid, probably, in all the established pursuits, especially by expending more than the usual care and labour in having the stock in trade of superior quality. Even in bread, pie, or cake baking, numerous as the bakers are, I doubt not many more could do well by producing these articles of a quality better than the average. A lady, the widow of a Boston merchant, who, though once opulent, had failed, a few years ago made an independence by baking what is called domestic bread, in contradistinction to what is known as bakers' bread. Her fresh-looking, sweet-tasted loaves, of full weight, were so much choicer than the ordinary bread, that customers flocked to her little store; and in a very few years she had accumulated enough to purchase five hundred acres of land in Michigan, three hundred of which, we were told, five years ago, were in a high state of cultivation; and from these three hundred acres she had raised in one year 6000 dollars-worth of wheat.' Every one could present instances within his own knowledge of similar if not greater success in ordinary pursuits, by persons simply doing well what others perform only with average excellence. Our own recollection affords the example of Carr, the famous baker of Carlisle, who began in a very humble way, and now conducts an immense manufactory of biscuits, which find a demand in all parts of the world. Here our limited space obliges us to stop: we close by quoting our author's appropriately terminating remark: 'Work, discouragement, anxiety, are inevitable incidents in all pursuits and conditions of life; and so designed, doubtless, to teach us, that even though we make this earth a new Eden, it is not our permanent habitation; that money is not the one thing needful; and that pecuniary success is not the best nor the final success.'

FROM OUR YOUNGEST CONTRIBUTOR.

It was a place I had never been to before; and no, thank you, I'd rather not go again. It was like a seaport town, you know, and everybody got their livings by selling fish; and so I set off to climb a very high hill that was there. And the sun seemed perched at the top of the hill like a great snow-ball, only not the colour of snow, and I kept wondering what would become of me if it should chance to roll down.

There was a nice little girl climbing the hill about ten yards ahead of me. A nice little girl? Oh, you know what I mean—she wore ankle-bands, trousers with crochet round them, and one of those all-round-my-hats.

I asked her who was her hatter, and said it was very warm climbing. 'Miss, may I have the pleasure of giving you a hand up?' and she said: 'Thank you, sir. You are a very polite boy; but, thank you, I haven't far to go.'

No, I didn't see her face; she had one of those hats on, didn't I tell you? but she had a very nice voice, like ma's when she speaks to baby. When we got to the top of the hill, there was a great big fellow waiting for us, and he never said a word, but came and punched me, and when I said: 'What's that for?' he boxed me the second time; and so I said: 'Just do that again—will you?' and he did.

Then the little girl whispered to me that he was her husband, and that I'd better run away, because he had a knack of putting little boys out of their misery, and then pickling them. She said he'd killed more people in his time than he could bury if he were to dig graves twelve hours a day, besides overtime, for sixty years. So I gave him a regular look, and ran down the hill, calling him 'Old Doctor! Old Pills!'

Not the same side of the hill; and I ran straight into an orchard, where there were lots of apple and pear trees. There was a fellow there who used to go to Cockie Bell's school when I did, and he was stealing apples. I told him that the Bible says, Thou shalt not steal, and, besides, you'll get caught at it; and just at that moment the old farmer came up, and he said to that fellow that used to go to Cockie Bell's: 'Brimstone!' and to me: 'My little man, I have overheard your very sensible remarks, and I perceive you have had a religious bringing-up.'

And I said: 'Can you sell me sixpenceworth?' And he said: 'Of my pears?' And I said: 'Yes, sir, please.' And he said: 'My fine little fellow, we will see—we will see.'

When he was gone, I remembered that I had bought a pennyworth of Turkey nobs out of the sixpence, and when I counted my money, there, I'd only fivepence.

When he came back with a large dishful of pears, I looked at them and said: 'Haven't you made a mistake, sir?—wasn't it fivepenceworth I said?' and he said: 'Oh, was it, my fine little fellow? Well, then, I've made a mistake; but, as you are a good boy, and have pious parents, you shall have the pears all the same.'

Then he went on digging in a parsley-bed, and I sat down eating the pears, only they had no taste, and he shouted to know if I shouldn't like to play with his little boy; and I said: 'What! all about this garden?' And he said: 'Yes.' And I said: 'Oh! shouldn't I though!'

So he took me to his house—a very funny house, and he had no wife, and it was very dirty; and he opened the door of a room, and there was a horrid monster; and he said that was his little boy, why didn't I speak to him. And so I said: 'Have you any marbles?' And that horrid monster said: 'Oh, lots! Come in; I'll play you.' And I wanted to run away, only I could not; and this creature began letting off fire-wheels on me, and throwing squibs and serpents in my face; and he made me hold my arms straight out, and he rammed them hard, and let them off like cannons, and blew my fingers into a nasty dark pond; and horrid alligators, with red eyes, came and tried to swallow them; and leeches came creeping up my trouser-legs, and they got in my mouth, and down my throat, and up my nose, and some of them curled themselves up in my head, as if they were going to stop there a good while. And that horrid little monster sat on a bundle of serpents, and they made themselves into an arm-chair for him, and he kept laughing and shouting: 'I'll play you—I'll give you sixpenceworth of pears for fivepence.' And some very little red-hot men came and kept jumping through my eyes, and then rolling out of my mouth, follow my leader, and trying who could do it quickest. And one of them borrowed a pair of hob-nailed shoes, and lay on his back on my tongue, filing at my teeth with them. And another of them kept putting his head out of my left ear-hole, and shouted 'Apples!' and then out of my right ear-hole, and shouted 'Pears!'

All at once the side of the room fell down, and there was such a beautiful lady sailing in a large cockle-shell on a lake of very blue water, and she said: 'Physic!' and all these demons vanished.

Didn't you guess? Why, that was ma, and she said: 'For goodness' sake, Alfred, dear, why do you moan so pitiably?' And when I told her all about it, she said: 'My love, you have had the nightmare. It is time to take your medicine. Don't go to sleep on your back, or you will have it again.' And I said: 'What! the medicine, ma?' And she said: 'No, dear, the nightmare.'

THE WAITS.

[From a well-selected collection of poems, entitled *The Sacred Minstrel*,* and edited by the Rev. Charles Rogers, we extract the following verses. Its devotional songs consist not only of those hymned by Bards already sainted, but comprise many sacred lyrics of the Living; while a short memoir of the writer enhances the interest of each composition. This little volume, admirably printed and elegantly finished, affords a pleasant contrast to the somewhat sombre and unattractive appearance of the majority of works of the same class. The present extract is selected not only for its beauty, but because the poetical writings of its talented authoress, Mrs T. K. Hervey, are welcome and familiar to the readers of this Journal.]

HARK! where peals yon swelling anthem?—Hark! it winds its solemn way,
Loud on the blackening midnight borne, faint on the morning gray;
Now soaring, hovering, floating, like the angel's song on high,
Back from the wondering shepherd-groups, to glory and the sky:
'Awake, awake, immortal souls! make straight the way and clear;
Yon star is burning in the east; behold! your God is near!'

Past the dying maiden's chamber, where the sobbing night-winds thrill,
And the heart's cry is the louder that the voice of love is still;
Where hungry hope is starved to death, and withers day by day,
And silent faith can do no more, but lift the hands and pray;
More solemn-sweet steals down the street to sounding harp and horn;
'In death's despite, this blessed night, is thy Redeemer born!'

Past the sacred domes of wedded homes, whose hearths the angels keep,
Where the plighted hands are mutely locked in the sweet unsevered sleep;
Under the towers, along the bowers, still hallowed by its gleam,
Where, in their bright unsullied youth, love led them in a dream;
Hark! where it rolls! It thrills their souls—'Arise, and bend the knee;
HE comes, who blest the wedding-feast in Cana of Galilee!'

Past the noble house of charity, where beams of morning play
On eyes of sightless innocents, that know not it is day;
Whose ravished orbs are turned to heaven, how dark soe'er it be,
In the tender joy of faith that feels the love it cannot see;
And the quickened ear drinks deep the sound, and the soul leaps to the eye—
'Behold the light of all the world, the day-spring from on high!'

Past the lorn and houseless fugitive, by the slimy river's brink,
Ere she springs beneath the glassy pool, where all her sorrows sink;
Till she dream she hears the voice of Him who walked the waters wide,
And the saving music dies not till her steps are turned aside;
It sighs to her, it cries to her, in the hour of her dismay—
'Stood He not by Mary Magdalene when the stone was rolled away?'

Past by the branded sepulchres that whiten 'neath the moon;
Past by the stony torture-cells washed by the black lagune;
By felon graves, by robber caves, and dungeon's vaulted dome,
Sweeps on that triumph-strain that speaks a conqueror to come—
'He comes not in the sounding blast, nor in the rolling thunder,
But on the wings of mercy borne, to burst your bonds asunder!'

More holy-tender swells the song, where, pure and undefiled,
A mother, towards the reddening east, lifts up her new-born child—
'Give glory unto God this night, thrice blessed as thou art!
Like Mary, fast for ever keep His sayings in thy heart;
Hear thou the precious words of joy breathed by those lips divine—
"Such as these are of my kingdom"—"little children," like to thine!'

Hark! around the palace chambers—hark! along the palace walls,
Like the shouting of a conquering band, the strain of triumph falls;
As starts the monarch from his throne the armed host to meet,
Down drops the crown unto his knee, the purple to his feet;
Awe-struck, he veils his humbled brow, while loud the anthem rings—
'Glory, glory in the highest, unto Him, the King of kings!'

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REWARDS OF PATRIOTISM.

On the 6th of March last, the ship's boats of the *David Stuart* landed sixty-six individuals in Queenstown, whose arrival, though destined to excite general interest throughout Europe, and carry terror to the craven heart of Ferdinand II., did not at first create much sensation in that neighbourhood. The free-trade system has made such sounds and sights as foreign costumes and alien tongues too familiar in that thriving seaport to draw more than a passing remark from the loungers who throng its beach. But, on a closer inspection, there appeared such a striking contrast between their scanty garments and the air of innate nobility which external disadvantages could not disguise—between the unhealthy pallor of their sunken cheeks and the rapturous energy with which they actually kissed the oozy strand, and gazed delightedly on the commonest objects round them—that it could scarcely be disregarded. Apathy gave way to curiosity, which, again, warmed into enthusiasm, when it became known that these were the Neapolitan exiles who had escaped from the execrable tyranny of King Bomba, after years of such sufferings as humanity shudders to recall. They were no vulgar malefactors, whose crimes excite too much disgust in our breast to leave room for any pity for their misfortunes; they had not in any way violated the laws of society; there was not a stain upon their honour, or a crime on their conscience. The head and front of their offending was that they were too patriotic and independent to submit patiently to the galling thraldom in which the kingdom of the Two Sicilies has for years been held. They murmured at the ruinous policy of King Ferdinand in discouraging arts and manufactures, withholding education, and doing everything in his power to brutalise the nature of his subjects, in order that they might be the better fitted to wear the heavy yoke he wished to impose upon them; and, worst of all, they asked for a representative government, to check the daily encroachments of an arbitrary despot. It would require more space than our present limits could afford, to detail the various struggles which preceded the final catastrophe; what concessions were made to fear, and withdrawn when the threatening storm had passed over; how many fair promises were made, and how shamelessly they were broken. Suffice to say, they were brought to a mock-trial before corrupt judges; and on the perjured evidence of suborned witnesses, were condemned, some to death, some to the 'Ergastolo,' which involves imprisonment for life; and others to various terms of imprisonment, varying from fifteen to thirty years.

Amongst the persons thus condemned there were a few of the lower class; but the majority were men of birth and education, of refined tastes and intellectual pursuits, which made them all the more sensitive to the insults heaped upon them. Grosser natures would have been insensible to many of the indignities which the refined cruelty of one who knew not the name of mercy compelled them to endure. Their being for many years restricted from seeing or writing to their families, and the deprivation of books, paper, or writing materials of any kind, appear to have been more keenly felt than any of their physical sufferings. If a particle of paper or a fragment of a pen was discovered in their dungeon, it was made the excuse for harsher treatment, or the justification of severe punishment, in the invention of which their jailers displayed malignant ingenuity. One of them, called the *puntale*, consisted of a stake driven into the ground, to which the unhappy victim was fastened round the ankle by a heavy chain, weighing twenty-five pounds. It was long enough to allow him to move a little, like a wild beast in a cage; but the intolerable weight of the chain and the fetters eating into the flesh, soon rendered movement too painful to be voluntarily attempted. Another diabolical device was linking the right foot of one prisoner to the left foot of another by a heavy chain, so short as only to allow of their taking steps of a few inches at a time. The victims of this enforced companionship say they did not suffer so much from anything as from the constant worry of being obliged to suit every movement and change of posture to the will of another; it being, of course, impossible for either to sit, stand, or walk, unless both moved exactly in concert. If one of them became ill, the other had only the choice of remaining in bed, or lying alongside of it; and in order to make the punishment greater, they invariably linked political offenders to assassins or thieves.

During the earlier part of their imprisonment, they were confined in the dungeons of Ischia, Procida, Nisida, and San Stephano, islands in the beautiful Bay of Naples—dark, foul dens, most of them below the level of the sea, dripping with slimy moisture, and fetid from stagnant air and noxious exhalations.

These miserable cells being considered too luxurious by their vindictive sovereign, some fifty of the most illustrious prisoners were, without any previous warning, collected together in a steamer, manacled and handcuffed, and then thrown into the arsenal at Naples. After remaining there for one night, they were sent on to Montefusco, a stronghold of the

Neapolitan government, situated in a desolate part of the country, about forty miles east of Naples. It had been for ages reserved exclusively for bandits and felons convicted of the most heinous crimes, none of whom left its gloomy walls except to undergo the extreme penalty of their guilt. So fearful was its reputation, that the Provincial Council, moved for once by something like pity, had some years previously published an edict, directing its discontinuance as a place of confinement. It was, however, deemed good enough for these state-prisoners, among whom were the Baron Poerio, the Duke di Caballino, and many other illustrious names. Here all their previous sufferings were aggravated tenfold. The chains with which they were loaded during their removal were still retained; they slept on the bare earth, in damp rooms, whose windows, supplied with iron gratings instead of glass, allowed the chill night-air to benumb their shivering frames. They were clothed in the prison-dress commonly supplied to felons, which was never changed until it actually fell to pieces. They were surrounded by spies and sbirri, who were applauded in proportion to their harshness to the unlucky prisoners intrusted to their charge, and instantly punished or dismissed for giving them a word of kindness or look of sympathy. A priest who gave them his blessing through a grating, was immediately seized, and banished to a distant province, where he still remains under the surveillance of the police.

When at length permitted to write to their families, they were only allowed to do so at stated intervals, a few at a time, and to confine themselves to the most ordinary topics, both letters and answers being invariably left unsealed, and read before delivery. After remaining at Montefusco over three years, it was considered that the number was dangerously large, or, possibly, that separating those who had been so long companions in misfortune would fill to overflowing the bitter cup they were forced to drain. They were accordingly divided, and a portion sent off to Monte-Sarchio, where a dungeon had been expressly fitted up for them in the middle of a ruined fortress. Here they fared little better—the same system of espionage and coercion being continued, of which some idea may be formed from the fact, that thirty prisoners, placed in five different rooms, were, in addition to turnkeys and police, guarded night and day by seven sentries. During six hours of each day they were allowed to take such limited exercise as the prison-yard afforded; but during the remaining eighteen, the door was never allowed to be opened on any pretext whatsoever. Nothing was visible from the closely barred windows except a patch of sky and the tops of some distant mountains. Without, there was nothing that could divert their attention from their own unhappy lot; and within, they were not allowed any of those resources which might assist in passing the time. As if to mark Heaven's displeasure against those accursed walls, Monte-Sarchio was struck by lightning in 1857, and a second time greatly injured by a violent shock of an earthquake in March 1858. But on neither occasion did their jailers relax their severity for a moment, or treat with common humanity the unhappy prisoners, whose helpless position greatly increased the horrors of their situation.

When allowed to see their friends, it was contrived in such a manner as to become the means of inflicting fresh insults; they were not permitted to approach nearer to each other than two grated openings some fifteen feet apart, the passage between which was filled with turnkeys and police, who did not content themselves with turning into ridicule the sacred interchanges of family confidence, and making sport of the emotion naturally manifested, but who stopped the conversation the moment it passed the limit of the commonplaces which they thought fit to prescribe, and either terminated the interview abruptly, or obliged them to confine themselves to the most ordinary topics. There could be little pleasure in meetings such as these, particularly when they were made the occasion of punishment not only to the prisoners themselves, but also to the friends who visited them, the slightest infringement of the arbitrary code of rules by either party being made a pretext for severe punishment.

Many of the anecdotes related by the exiles are tinged with the romantic colouring of their own minds, and shew, in an uneventful life where 'to-day is as to-morrow,' how fondly the mind dwells upon the most trifling incident which presents itself to break the intolerable monotony of existence. Here is one of them, in the words of a noble exile, whose winning manners and cultivated mind have gained for him many friends in this country: 'A nightingale, as if on a mission from nature, apparently feeling for our sorrows and solitude, used to come to the boughs of a mulberry tree, and with his plaintive song express our griefs, so that he became our friend, the friend of our very hearts: we used to throng to the prison bars to listen to, and treasure his loving plaint. Ah! fond fool, he with his tender ditty awakened suspicions among the police that we had communication with the outer world, a blessing indeed which they trusted had ended for us. They shouted with their voices, and hurled sticks, but in the evenings the little nightingale came again and again with his song of solace to us; and his sympathy for patriotism brought his doom—he was shot.'

The prisoners left behind at that place, worthy of its dismal name—Montefusco (gloomy mountain) —were attacked with cholera and typhus fever, when common care and medical assistance being purposely withheld, most of the cases terminated fatally, to the undisguised satisfaction of the tyrant. As they were not chained two and two in this place, it was the custom to remove each patient to a place called the Hospital, where the sufferer was placed on a filthy bed; and to prevent the possibility of escape, and lessen the small chance of recovery, a chain, attached to a staple driven into the floor at the foot of the wretched pallet, was fastened round the ankle in such a manner as to render it impossible for the patient to relieve the restlessness of illness by any change of posture. This refinement of cruelty was only once relaxed in the case of a distinguished member of the medical profession, formerly professor of medicine in the university at Naples, whose unrepining fortitude and amiable disposition won upon the stern nature of his jailers.

As, however, it was necessary to report the most trifling matter to government, an account of this piece of leniency was transmitted in due course. The savage answer returned was to the effect: 'If he is dead, so much the better; if not, replace the chain.' When the order arrived, the sufferer was so much prostrated by sickness, that any attempt at escape was out of the question; nevertheless, the brutal mandate was instantly obeyed, and the fetters riveted on actually whilst the priest was at his side administering the last rites of his church to the dying. Much to the surprise of all, the patient survived this unparalleled martyrdom; and by the interposition of a merciful Providence, recovered, to become a free man, and to stir many a heart with indignation for his wrongs, and sympathy with sufferings so patiently borne.

This gentleman, with two others, was placed in confinement two years before the rest of his compatriots, having thus been altogether twelve years in prison. Probably the prison regulations were at this time less stringent than they afterwards became; at all events, his little girl, a young heroine of six years old, who preferred any hardship to separation from her father, accompanied him to prison, and remained there a voluntary captive for four months, her infantile grace and tender affection forming a strange contrast to the harsh and forbidding aspect of everything around her. But the happiness of such companionship was considered too great for a political offender, even if fatherly affection had not shrunk from permitting such a sacrifice, and parent and daughter were separated. He was not permitted to see her afterwards, except on the shore, at some distance from the ship before leaving; but an amateur-artist took a good likeness of her; and though the father was not permitted to see the original, no objection was made to his keeping the picture, which was his constant companion during the long and weary years of captivity which succeeded. So carefully did he keep it, that when liberty came at last, and found him in a deplorably destitute condition, a ragged blouse doing duty for coat, waistcoat, and shirt, the cherished portrait was preserved in safety, and brought to this country, where the simple narrative attached to it has kindled into enthusiasm many a phlegmatic British heart.

In the island of Sicily, matters have been, if possible, worse. The horrors committed at the siege of Messina and Palermo have gained an unhappy celebrity throughout Europe, and earned for King Ferdinand the sobriquet of Bomba. The insurrection of 1848, which convulsed the whole of Italy, extended itself to Sicily also, where it was speedily suppressed, but not without terrible carnage on both sides. Martial law was proclaimed throughout the island, and for several years afterwards executions were of daily occurrence. The form even of a trial was not considered necessary; the suspected persons were thrown into the prisons of Palermo, and kept there year after year without any definite charge being brought against them. If brought out, the only alternative they had to expect was to be dressed in black sacks, with bare feet, veiled faces, their hands tied behind their backs, and a placard attached to their breasts, on which was written, 'L'uomo empio.' Thus attired, and escorted by large bodies of troops, the prisoners were paraded through the principal streets of the city until they arrived at the Piazza della Fiera Vecchia, or other place selected for the bloody deed. They were then placed in a convenient position, the veils lifted from their faces, to allow of their being identified, a few formalities hastily gone through, and then a firing-party of the Swiss guards stepped out from the ranks, who were generally too impatient to allow the prisoners to finish their farewell speech to the assembled throng, before their bullets completed the last act of the dreadful tragedy. The slightest suspicions were considered a sufficient ground for this capital punishment in its most ignominious form. The discovery of a dagger in the house, or the possession of a cartridge, was punished with death. If the obnoxious individual was too cautious to give any pretence for even the slightest charge, the clumsy device was resorted to of throwing in a pistol or stiletto through an open casement, and then sending a party of police to search the house, which was thus convicted of violating the law which forbade the Sicilians to bear arms of any description.

Besides the numbers thus publicly executed, hundreds of others perished by the slow poison of foul air and long confinement, as well as the want of medical aid during the prevalence of any infectious disease. We find it stated on unquestionable authority, that when the cholera broke out a few years ago, no less than 243 state-prisoners perished from its effects in the neighbourhood of Naples alone. The same fate still threatens hundreds more, who are now languishing in the foul and noisome dungeons so plentiful in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. The sixty-six individuals above mentioned form but a small portion of those who have suffered for their political opinions; and even of those restored to liberty, many will carry to their grave the tokens of their long captivity in shattered constitutions and premature old age. The sight of some is impaired from remaining so long in darkened rooms; the limbs of others are crippled from want of exercise, or from corroding fetters which have eaten into the flesh: one or two have been in prison for twenty years, and none for a less period than ten. To some, the boon of liberty came too late; they were too much enfeebled by long suffering to bear a sea-voyage, and had to be carried back from the ship. Some people have the unlucky art of conferring a favour in such a manner as to convert it into a fresh source of wrong. The commutation of the sentences of these political prisoners into banishment for life, was wrung from the fears, and not from the clemency of King Ferdinand. If anything was wanting to shew the revengeful malignity of his disposition, it will be found in the fact, that of the ninety-one individuals whose names are included in the decree of perpetual banishment, several had gone to their long homes eight years before it was passed.

How often, as we read of the atrocities committed by the Inquisition, or see the path worn by the prisoners' feet in the hard floor of the Piombi at Venice, whilst we shudder at the tortures of Dante's Ugolino, or sympathise with the imaginary sufferings of the Prisoner of Chillon, have we complacently thanked Heaven that such horrors have long since ceased to exist! Our readers, however, may rest assured that if the secrets of every prison-house could be revealed, all past atrocities would sink into insignificance compared with those which have been lately enacted in Naples; and that, so far from exaggerating any of the above statements, we have purposely kept back others which are too shocking for publication, and too far beyond all common experience to find general belief.

The manner of the final escape of these poor fellows was as romantic as the rest of their story, but far more agreeable. 'At Cadiz, the vessel in which they were sailing, bound for America, was joined by a young man, Raffaello Settembrini, a son of the patriot, one of the exiles. He signed articles as a seaman, and kept his incognito. When the *Stromboli* departed, the exiles went to the captain and demanded to be carried to England. He refused: his guarantee would be forfeited. The exiles insisted, produced Raffaelo Settembrini, attired in the uniform of the Galway packet-ships, declared they had a navigator of their own, and practically took possession of the ship. The captain turned her stem towards England; the exiles set a watch upon the compass to see that he kept her head true; and after a voyage of fourteen days, the *David Stuart* anchored in Cork Harbour.'

AN INDISPENSABLE PLAGUE OF LIFE.

Of all the over-worked, under-paid daughters of toil, none perhaps deserve more of our sympathy, or receive less, than that domestic drudge, the maid-of-all-work. Early and late she is always at it, with no prospective reward to stimulate exertion, but, on the contrary, a positive certainty that, let her work and save as she may, she will never be able to realise a sufficiency to support her in her old age. Her life a series of changes from one kitchen to another—never knowing what it is to feel that she has a permanent home—and but rarely having the sympathies of the household sufficiently on her side, to awaken in her the slightest feelings of interest or attachment in return. Then, again, how her services are often undervalued; and upon what frivolous and unjust grounds she 'has notice;' and when she leaves the house with her trunk—which, perhaps, has been secretly rummaged by her mistress, to see that all is right—what criminal indifference is often manifested as to where she goes or what becomes of her; her destination being too often some cheap lodging-house, where the little balance of wages paid to her at leaving is soon exhausted; and exposed as she is to every temptation, she is glad to take the first situation that presents itself, no matter how uncongenial, where she will probably remain until some 'words' with her mistress necessitate another move, with the same attendant circumstances.

I do not pretend to say that all are alike, either as regards mistresses or servants; but that this picture of many a household is a true one, who would deny that has had to listen to the weary dissertations so constantly indulged in whenever two or more matrons get together? They will tell you that 'the servants of the present day are not the servants of former years;' 'that now they must have this, that, and the other;' and, moreover, 'that nothing is good enough for them;' with very much more of a similar description.

A lady of my acquaintance applied for a servant at a register-office, and the conversation turning upon the great difficulty of obtaining good servants, and the still greater difficulty of keeping them when obtained, my friend interrogated the old lady who kept the office as to what she attributed this apparently increasing grievance.

'Oh, bless yer, mum,' she replied, 'it's all along of this here eddecation, and that there penny-postage.'

Poor, honest old soul, if education were the cause of servants changing their places, what a fixture she would have been had she in early life been placed out at service!

But enough of this: my object is not to moralise on 'servantgalism,' but simply to shew, by my own domestic experiences, that, rail as we may about our troubles and annoyances with servants, they are, to say the least, very necessary evils. I make this statement advisedly; and that I am justified in so doing, the following domestic incident shall shew.

Mrs C—— and myself have lived together for some four or five years in matrimonial bliss; and although we should not perhaps be strictly entitled to contend for the 'Dunmow flitch,' yet as things go, we live, and have lived together very comfortably. But apart from Mrs C——'s natural amiability of temper, I attribute no small share of this domestic bliss to the fact, that from the day when Mrs C—— first claimed me as her own, we have never changed, or thought of changing, our maid-servant. Through good and evil report, for better and for worse, she abides with us still; and we endeavour to be kind and considerate to her, and she in return is faithful and attached to us.

That we have had no changes, I do not pretend to maintain; for Mrs C—— has born me two children—a boy and a girl; and as a matter of course, they required a larger amount of personal attention than she was justified in devoting to them, considering the numerous household duties that devolved upon her.

So we took a nurse for the first, the boy; but when he was sufficiently old to 'go alone,' we dismissed his attendant, as frugal folk should.

On the advent of our second, the girl, we did the same; though the world promising to shine upon us with rather a brighter face, we proposed retaining her as a permanent portion of our establishment. But the unfortunate part of the business was that the world did *not* shine with any brighter lustre than before, so that nurse the second had to share the fate of nurse the first; my wife—who attaches vast importance to what folks say of us—remarking that our friends would attribute this little coming down to the commercial panic, which had compelled many much richer than ourselves to reduce their establishments; although, for my own part, I can place my hand upon my heart and, *sub rosâ*, solemnly aver that I don't believe that the panic made the difference of one penny-piece in my income; but my wife very sagely replies to this by inquiring: 'What's the use of having a panic at all if somebody does not profit by it?'

Our domestic establishment is therefore reduced to its original complement of *one;* and as far as I can see, everything is done quite as well as when it was placed upon a 'war-footing.'

Now, although horticulture has undoubtedly made rapid strides within the last few years, it has never yet succeeded, so far as I have been able to learn, in growing its roses without the proverbially attendant thorns; and on the same principle, our 'Mary' has had her drawbacks. In her own peculiar phraseology, she 'enjoys very bad health'—in short, she is faithful, but weakly; and she has been 'on our hands' for days together, on more occasions than one, when we have been compelled to call in the professional assistance of certain charwomen, to my own unmitigated disgust, and to the serious derangement of Mrs C——'s otherwise placid and genial temper.

But at the time I write, things have assumed a gloomier aspect than usual—our faithful ally is again *hors de combat. It* has fallen in her knee this time; and as she cannot put her foot to the ground, she has to keep her bed as a matter of course. *It* fell in her back last autumn, and the amount of fomentation and bleeding that had to be resorted to, to quell this mysterious *it*, was positively appalling.

Whatever the proper medical term for this mysterious stranger may be, or whether the College of Physicians is at all cognizant of its existence or not, is a matter of perfect indifference to me individually, compared with the palpable fact, that her knee is twice its usual size, and that my household is in confusion. But worse remains behind. Hitherto, when these almost periodical visitations have taken place, we have, as before stated, called in the services of some friendly charwoman; but now even this small modicum of comfort is denied us, for a distinguished scientific society is holding its meetings in our town, and late dinners, and still later suppers, being the order of the day and night, all available charring talent has been engaged at a high premium by hotel-keepers and others; and no amount of persuasive eloquence would induce a single member of the sisterhood to relinquish her reversionary interest in the 'wine-bottoms,' 'heel-taps,' and other good things common on these occasions, to attend to our quiet and somewhat frugal household. There was, therefore, nothing for it but to turn to and do the work ourselves. So Mrs C—— and myself held a council of war, in which she did all the talking, while I remained in a state of gloomy silence, brooding over the coming day and its attendant troubles. In vain my helpmate tried to rouse my flagging spirits by telling me that, before now, men had risen to eminence through the kitchen, even to the height of conversing with princes, and having their portraits engraved on the covers of books. What was all this to me? I was a leading member of a flourishing debating society, and being of a republican turn of mind, I was in the habit of publicly expressing, in strong terms, my utter want of faith in both the first and second estate of the realm. So I told Mrs C—— (somewhat testily, I fear) that I didn't want to converse with princes, even if I had the chance; all that I *did* want was, to be able to come down to breakfast at eight o'clock, and find all comfortably prepared as usual, without my having personally to take part in producing this desired result. This plainly could not be; so I was compelled to yield to circumstances, and agreed to do my share of the work like a man—or, more properly speaking, like a *woman*.

Now, our youngest, although partaking somewhat freely from the maternal breast, is still compelled to supplement nature with a small dish of 'pap,' the manufacture of which now devolved upon me.

That this is not a manly occupation, the reader will readily admit, especially for an individual six feet high, stout in proportion, and with large bushy whiskers; but still I could have borne with it, and even endeavoured to have thrown something like a halo round it, by the consideration that I was doing my duty as a husband and a father, had not one little thing troubled me, which was this—I did not feel secure from observation. I was denied the natural rights of an Englishman, inasmuch as my house was not my castle, as far as privacy and seclusion were concerned. An emissary from a neighbouring milk-shop was accustomed to steal quietly up the garden, walk into the kitchen and deposit her milk; and inasmuch as she appeared to have no regular periods of advent, no amount of calculation on my part would be of any avail in preventing a collision.

On one occasion, as I was stooping over the fire, sedulously stirring the contents of the sauce-pan, I heard the door quietly open, and I had but just time, ere she entered, to spring up, turn my back to the fire, place my hands under my coat-tails, and commence whistling a light and cheerful air, which, as you can well imagine, ill accorded with my feelings at the moment; for I knew that the pap was on the point of boiling, and that every second was of consequence. It was impossible to give it a stir from behind; for the creature had an awful squint, and for the life of me I could not tell which eye commanded me. Imagine my feeling, therefore, when my now practised ear plainly detected the thick, unwholesome blu-u-p peculiar to the 'pap' of childhood when in a state of ebullition. I felt that 'all was over,' in more senses than one, and involuntarily commenced whistling *All is Lost*, with tremulous variations.

What was I to do? My evil genius still delayed her departure; the exigencies of the moment demanded prompt and vigorous action. A brilliant thought struck me. Happening to glance out of the window, I caught sight of a milk-can which she had left at the garden-gate. I rushed to the window, threw up the sash, and exclaimed in a stentorian voice: 'Get out, you ugly brute;' and turning hastily round to the girl—who by her manner seemed to imagine that the observation was addressed to her personally—I remarked: 'That great dog will very soon drink up all your milk.' The *ruse* took; and as she clattered down the garden-walk, vowing vengeance against the canine race in general, and my imaginary friend in particular, I quietly served up the baby's breakfast as if nothing whatever had happened.

Nevertheless, I would advise all those who at present look upon servants as the 'greatest plague of life,' just to try, for one week, to dispense with their services; and if, at the end of that time, they still hold to the same opinion, I would strongly recommend them to continue the experiment in perpetuity.

As far as I am personally concerned, I feel humbled and contrite—humbled, in that I am compelled to acknowledge my almost childlike dependence upon the weaker sex for so large a portion of my daily comforts and necessities—and contrite, when I think of the many cross and hasty words that I have at times indulged in, when any little domestic irregularity has occasioned me annoyance. From henceforth, our 'Mary' and her office will stand much exalted in my estimation; and instead of considering her as an outsider, to be put off or on at pleasure, I shall always endeavour to look upon her as a necessary part of our domestic machinery—without which the whole must inevitably stand still—to be therefore honoured and respected; for 'wherefore should the head say unto the feet, I have no need of thee?'

A CALIFORNIAN GAMBLING-HOUSE.*

The Plaza Grande of the city of San Francisco is alive with busy crowds, passing and repassing in all directions; some chaffering and bargaining, others looking on in idle curiosity: merchants and brokers gravely discussing prices, seeking customers, or cheapening newly arrived wares; weather-beaten gold-diggers, their stalwart frames encased in soiled worn garments, lounging carelessly along with their well-filled leathern money-bag in their girdle; new-comers, just landed from the shipping in the bay, confused and bewildered by the novel sights and sounds around them; Californian Spaniards, in their gay serapes, and heavy, ringing spurs; long-tailed Chinese, with loose blue jackets and bare throats, independent of cravats and neck-ties; swarms of smart trim seamen from the American men-of-war riding at anchor off the port; French, Americans, Germans, English, Argentines, Spaniards, South-sea Islanders, negroes, and mulattoes, all intent upon their various objects of business or pleasure; gold the magnet of attraction; gold the aim and end for which all, of every hue and of every clime, have left their distant homes.

The first wild excitement, however, was past, in which numbers had madly rushed to the mountains, to see and to dig for themselves; most had already been there, and had returned completely satisfied, having altogether failed to find gold, whilst they had spent the little they took with them; and having now arrived at the conviction that there are other ways and means of making money in California, less laborious and uncertain than gold-digging.

Numbers had now settled in the towns as merchants or factors, labourers or artisans, boatmen, porters, policemen, pedlers, cooks, wood-cutters, waiters, pastry-cooks, clerks; in short, anything and everything by which to make money rapidly, and then—to go back to their homes? No, to return to the diggings; for, as they said, they 'had not known how to set about it on their first attempt.'

Of all who resorted to California, there was but one class of men whose object was neither to work nor to trade, neither to buy nor to sell. They came furnished with playing-cards from the United States, where entire manufactories are employed in preparing such articles, *punctured*, which their owners can distinguish by the touch, without turning them up. These men did nothing from the moment they stepped on shore, ay, nor on board the ship that brought them over, but handle their cards and count or weigh gold.

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* This graphic picture is a translation from the German.—Ed. *C. J.*

These were, and are, the licensed gamblers, whose central force is found in San Francisco, but whose ramifications extend to the diggings around in all directions—men who, with deceit and fraud for the foundation of their business, enter California in the firm determination of amassing wealth by all means and at all risks, and not to be turned aside though robbery and murder lie in their path.

England is reproached for sending her criminals to Australia; but they are saints compared with these dregs of the American people, amongst whom it is remarkable that there is scarcely one Englishman or Irishman. The most reprobate of these gamblers, and, indeed, the only ones who are a match for the quick-eyed Spaniard, so peculiarly cool and self-possessed in games of hazard, are the Americans.

From the splendid saloons of San Francisco, with their gaudy pictures and decorations, and hundreds of tables laden with gold, down to the miserable tent in the most distant mountain, where the serape, or blanket-cloak, thrown over a few boards roughly nailed together, serves as a gaming-table through the night, and at morning dawn does duty as bed and coverlet; wherever there is gold, these men are to be found, ready to rob the poor miner of the hardly earned reward of his toil; while the Spanish cloak hides both their well-filled money-bag, and the six-barrelled revolver and sharp bowie-knife, ready for attack or defence, as occasion may require.

We have not now, however, to do with the diggings; we are standing in the Plaza of San Francisco, and the twilight has suddenly spread its veil over the landscape, though the sun has scarcely disappeared behind the low coast range, and sunk into the sea to rise upon India's distant shores. But what are these large buildings, dividing Kearney Street from the Plaza, in which all seems suddenly alive and bustling? The mighty folding-doors are thrown wide open, and the brilliant light of a multitude of astral lamps dazzles the eyes of the crowds who are flowing into the halls. To the right and left, lie similar buildings, all built of brick, with iron balconies and window-shutters, to set at defiance the frequent conflagrations, which have three times already reduced this row of houses to ashes.

From each there issues a stream of light; from each proceeds wild noisy music; all are thronged with eager multitudes; and the spectator hesitates which to choose as the scene of his observations. The largest and most splendid, however, is this one, over whose entrance the name of *El Dorado* sparkles in bright gold letters; and though still half undecided whether to venture into the lion's den, our foot once over the threshold, curiosity overpowers our scruples, and the next minute we find ourselves in the middle of the room, astonished and almost bewildered by all we see around us.

We are in a vast saloon, the ceiling of which is supported by two rows of white lackered columns. A profusion of lamps render it almost as light as day. The walls are adorned with voluptuous pictures, designed, together with the noisy music, to attract loungers and sight-seers, who, once tempted within the doors, are pretty sure eventually to yield to the seductions of the gaming-tables. These tables are scattered about the room, with ample space between each to allow a number of men to sit and stand about them, and yet leave space for those who would walk up and down; the crowds who are still pressing in at the doors not being, generally, attracted to the tables until they have fully gratified their curiosity by gazing at all there is to see, and listening to all there is to hear.

To the right of the saloon, behind a long counter, stands a girl, a real, living, pretty, modest-looking young girl, in a close-fitting black silk dress, her slender fingers adorned with rings, supplying her many customers with tea, coffee, and chocolate, cakes, preserves, and confectionary of all sorts; whilst at the opposite corner of the hall, a man is stationed at a similar counter furnished with wine and spirits.

Lounging upon the tea-table are four or five tall uncouth young men, fixed in profound admiration of the young lady on the other side; swallowing one cup of tea after another, at a quarter dollar apiece, by way of excuse for remaining there; and, for the same reason, munching up a most unwholesome quantity of sweet-cakes and pastry.

A few steps behind them stands a group of backwoodsmen, enjoying, at a cheaper rate, the pleasure of gazing upon the pretty damsel who presides over the good things; and determinedly resisting all attempts to dislodge them from their post of observation.

The pretty tea-maker becomes by degrees the centre of attraction to the whole room; all who have once seen her return a second time, and few turn away without leaving behind at least their quarter-dollar, for something eatable or uneatable, were it only for the pleasure of listening to the few words she must speak in telling them the price of her wares. And wherefore is this? The maiden has certainly a very pretty pleasing face and neat figure, but is by no means a perfect beauty, and we might, in other towns, meet three or four equally pretty, or prettier girls in walking along a single street; but here it is not so. At home they have seen many such, as neat, and fair, and attractive, but not since they came to San Francisco. There were, at the time of which we speak, very few respectable women to be found there, and these few rarely, if ever, appeared in the streets.

But hold; what is this? What is going on at this table, attracting such crowds of gamblers and idlers? They seem to be playing very high here, and every one presses as close as possible, the hindmost standing on their toes to get a glimpse over their neighbours' shoulders.

At the table, amongst the professional gamblers and their accomplices, stands a young lad slowly shuffling a pack of cards by way of occupation until the game begins, and then eagerly watching it with his little sharp gray eyes, while involuntarily continuing to shuffle.

The game bears some resemblance to that of 'lansquenet;' the card thrown on the left side is for the banker, that on the right for the player; and the stake is doubled if he throws two above and two below, thus giving each player opportunity to stake on two at once. The boy, in whom we have begun to take an interest, is at most sixteen years old; he is tall and slender, yet his features would have something of a childlike innocent expression, were it not for the glittering sunken eye and sternly compressed lip. He has thrown down his pack of cards; his [illegible] hat is pushed up from his high pale forehead, his left hand is thrust into his bosom, his right hand is clenched and resting on the table, in the centre of which piles of dollars form a wall round a heap of nuggets and gold-pieces, and little stitched-up bags of gold-dust; while three or four larger lumps of gold [illegible] stamped bars of the same precious metal are laid [illegible] the top, but more for show than for use. His [illegible] perhaps twenty or five-and-twenty half 'eagles' dollars), lies upon the horseman (or queen), and his eyes are fixed in feverish excitement on the hands of the dealer. This latter, an American, sits cool and collected beside him, with the card that is to be taken off already in his grasp, and examines once more the stakes laid down—if all is in order. The uppermost cards are the ace and the queen. The boy has won, and a smile of triumph plays upon his lip.

'I shall pay you back to-night what you lent me, Robertson,' he says in a hoarse and trembling voice.

'It seems likely enough,' replies the gambler, with an ambiguous smile. 'You are in luck to-night, Lovell; you must follow it well up.'

'I leave that upon the queen, and put this upon the deuce,' says Lovell.

Here and there are smaller sums laid or altered, and again the cards are thrown—both stakes are lost.

'Confound it!' mutters the poor boy half inaudibly, pulling out of his pocket a little sack of gold-dust, at which the banker does not even deign to look. The sack might hold about two pounds; and the Spaniard who stands opposite to him, now throws a couple of ounces on the other card.

'You mistrust that gentleman's luck, señor, do you?' said the banker with a smile, holding the cards composedly in his left hand, as he fixed a searching look upon the Californian.

'Quien sabe?' replies the other with indifference, but—his card has won.

The young gambler muttered a curse between his closed teeth, and with a trembling hand he hastily felt in his pockets for more gold—in vain—not in this, not in that. 'Gone—stolen!' he murmured to himself, and his glaring eye wandered suspiciously from one to another of those who pressed round him. Their countenances expressed nothing but indifference or ridicule.

'Come, stranger; if you do not play any more, make way for others,' said a long-bearded fellow clad in a dirty ragged blouse and superannuated felt hat stuck sideways on his tangled locks. 'It seems to me you're done.'

'I shall stay here as long as I like,' answered Lovell shortly.

'Pray, sir, make room, if you do not play any more,' echoed the gambler who sat next him. 'Our table, you see, is quite crowded.'

'I have been robbed!' cries the young man, throwing an angry glance on the wearer of the smock-frock—'meanly, shamefully robbed.'

'Well, don't stare that way at me, my boy, if you please,' says smock-frock coolly.

'I stare at whom I like,' replied the boy in great excitement; 'and if he can't stand it, he may look another way.'

'Make room there, will ye?' said the miner to those who stood by; and seizing the young gambler with the gripe of a giant, he lifted him up and threw him behind him.

'Have a care—have a care!' shouted several voices the next moment; and two or three hands were raised to throw up the revolver, which the exasperated youth, regardless of consequences, was pointing at the head of his aggressor. Before they could wrest the weapon from him, however, he had twice pulled the trigger; one ball smashed the shade of an astral lamp, the fragments of which fell on the heads of those below, scattering them, laughing and swearing, in all directions; whilst the other harmlessly struck the ceiling, bringing down only a little plaster. The mark it made was not the only one of the kind to be seen there.

'Much obliged,' said the miner in the smock-frock coolly to the bystanders; and without troubling himself further about the youth, who was struggling desperately with those who held him, and actually foaming with rage, he took a packet of gold out of his blouse, and set it on the card nearest to him.

As it was feared that the enraged boy might have other weapons about him, he was taken in charge by some sturdy Irishmen, who volunteered their services for the purpose, and dragged him to the door, where he was made over to two policemen, who had hastened up on hearing the shots, and who led him safely away.

The idlers lounging about the saloon had all, meanwhile, thronged eagerly round the spot whence the shots proceeded, to see as much as possible of the fight they supposed to be going on; and the gamblers at the nearest tables found it necessary for a few minutes to use actual force in keeping back the crowd: even the tea-table was for the time forsaken.

There was, however, too much that was new and interesting on every side, to allow the spectators to fix their eyes long on any one point. From another part of the room there now arose a tumultuous noise of altercation and laughter. What had happened there? 'Bravo! Capitally done! Hurrah!' cheered the throng, and one indignant voice, vehemently protesting against something, was again and again drowned in the general shout of approval. A singular incident had occurred here, leading to a strife in which the crowd immediately took upon itself the office of judge and jury, decided promptly, and enforced the decision.

A man tidily and respectably dressed in a black frock-coat and dark trousers, had come regularly for some evenings—this was the seventh—always at the same time and to the same table; had for awhile looked on at the game, and at last drawn a linen bag out of his breast-pocket and staked it on a card. On the first evening the card had won; and he shook the bag out upon the table to count the money. There were twenty-eight Spanish dollars, upon which the banker quietly counted out to him the same sum, and the gentleman walked off with his gains without venturing on a second cast.

On the second evening, he came again, staked as before, and lost. Quite coolly, however, without even a look of discontent, he opened the bag, shook it out—it contained exactly the same sum as on the last occasion—then rolled it together, and thrusting it into his pocket, left the saloon. On the third, fourth, and fifth evenings the same thing occurred. The gamblers had got used to the man, and amused themselves with his odd ways. Again he lost, and behaved exactly as before, always taking the bag away with him.

On the sixth evening—and so exactly had he kept his time, that the gamblers said, laughing to each other: 'It can't be eight o'clock yet; the eight-and-twenty dollar man is not come.' He appeared again, staked as usual, and once more lost. The bar-keeper, who dispensed his wines and spirits just opposite to this table, could not forbear laughing aloud as the stranger shook out the money in his cool business-like way, as if paying a regular debt for some employer, rather than gambling and throwing away his own money.

The seventh evening came—it was a full minute past eight o'clock, and one of the gamblers said laughing to the other: 'We have used him too badly; we have frightened him away;' when his comrade pointed over his shoulder, and there was the man in the black frock-coat making his way to his customary place, where some who had happened to meet him there before, readily made room for him, and where he quietly took his seat, paying no sort of attention to the whispered jokes and laughter around him. Until precisely a quarter to nine, he gravely watched the play, and then brought out the well-known linen bag, setting it upon the deuce which was that moment turned up. Two cards were drawn, without the deuce appearing—now the ace fell on the left; and on the right—a scarcely perceptible smile played on the banker's lips—the deuce. The stranger turned pale as death; but without uttering a word upon his change of luck, he stretched out his hand for his linen bag, and was untying it, as usual, to count the dollars, when the gambler said laughing: 'Let it be; I know how much there is in it. Eight-and-twenty. Am I not right?'

'No,' said the man quietly, and shook out the silver upon the table, shook the bag again, and after the silver came a roll of closely wrapped bank-notes and a folded paper.

'What is this?' cried the startled gamblers, and the bystanders crowded up full of surprise and curiosity.

'It is my stake,' said the man with seeming indifference, and untied the ribbon that held the bank-notes together.

'Hold! That won't do,' exclaimed the gambler, throwing down his cards. 'That is false play. You have counted out only eight-and-twenty dollars the other evenings!'

'False play!' repeated the man, with a threatening frown. 'Prove it to be false play. Did I not place the bag, just as it lies there, upon that card? And did you make any objection to taking it unopened?'

'No, no. It is all right—it is all fair,' cried the bystanders, always ready and eager to take part against the professional gamblers, who they feel quite convinced do not play fairly, although they cannot resist the fascination of the gaming-table, but return again and again to be cheated of their money, as long as they have any to squander there.

'He has staked and won it, and he must have it,' they said.

'Count your money. How much is it?' said the gambler, who had whispered a few hasty words to his comrade. 'How much is it?'

'Firstly, eight-and-twenty dollars in silver,' he replied slowly, and the others laughed; 'then here is bank-notes—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight hundred dollars; and then, here'——

'What! more?'

'A small bill of exchange upon Smith and Penneken, as good as gold, accepted and all, the money only needs fetching—for three thousand.'

'Three thousand!' shouted the gambler, starting up from his chair. 'Are you mad? That is altogether near four thousand dollars. I shall not pay that!'

'Shall you not?' said the stranger, indignantly. 'Would you not have *taken* it, if I had *lost* it?'

'To be sure he would!' 'Of course!' 'Would he take it? Ay, all they can get, they take; and a little more!' exclaimed a number of voices. 'He must pay; there is no help for it.'

'Gentlemen,' protested the gambler, in the vain hope of obtaining a vote in his favour—'gentlemen, every evening in the last week that gentleman has staked'——

'And every time lost,' interrupted one of his hearers. 'I have been present several times, and have heard it from others also; and he has never made the least objection to paying.'

'But that was only twenty-eight dollars.'

'And if it were as many thousands!'

'Only let me speak,' remonstrated the gambler, who had turned deadly pale, and trembled all over. 'It was but eight-and-twenty dollars that he shook out upon the table, and the papers he held back. Three times already have I won the same sum from him.'

'Prove that I had a cent more than the eight-and-twenty dollars in the bag,' said the stranger, contemptuously. 'Such excuses as that won't serve your turn.'

'Why did you not keep the bag, *compañero?*' laughed a Spaniard who stood by; 'we keep all that is set on the card.'

'If he had lost again, nothing more would have come out of that confounded linen bag than the trumpery dollars,' said the other, savagely.

'That's possible; but you cannot prove it,' returned the lookers-on. 'You must pay.'

'I'll be hanged if I do!' said the gambler, furiously striking his clenched fist on the table. 'It is a new sort of rascally trick that they want to come over me with; but they have got hold of the wrong man! I won't pay.'

'You have won a hundred dollars from me in the last half-hour,' exclaimed a tall Kentuckian, pressing forward over the shoulders of the others, 'and I had to pay up to the last cent: if you refuse to pay *him*, you must fork that out again.'

'And mine too!' 'And mine!' 'And mine!' cried many voices together. 'I too have lost.' 'And I.' 'I lost ten dollars!' 'I lost fifty.' 'I lost five-and-twenty.' 'I a pound of gold: out with it if you won't pay!'

A brother-gambler now came up from a neighbouring table, and spoke in a whisper to his unlucky comrade, whilst the tumult was increasing around them. The other contended earnestly in the same tone for some minutes, but yielded at length to his persuasions, and they both took the money to count over again; carefully examining the bank-notes as well as the bill, which was drawn on one of the first banking-houses in the city.

There was nothing to be said against either the one or the other; and whilst the stranger, who had quite recovered his equanimity, sat quietly looking on, as if the hubbub was no concern of his, the gamblers counted out to him the money he had won, almost stripping the table of the heaps so ostentatiously piled up. Part of the payment consisted of several packets of gold-dust, which the stranger, before accepting, cut open, examined carefully, and then weighed at the counter just opposite, where he also took a glass of brandy. He found all correct, and disposing of the gold in his various pockets, he shook what remained into the mysterious linen bag, put the papers and bank-notes into his breast-pocket, and courteously thanking his zealous supporters, who returned his greeting with a thundering cheer, he left the saloon.

His quondam friends laughed and talked over the occurrence for a while. Of all present there was scarcely one, probably, who did not feel pretty sure that he had played false—that he had had his bank-notes and bill in the bag on each preceding evening, ready to be produced if he should win; but this they did not call dishonest—it was a clever trick. The gamblers themselves seized upon every advantage, fair or unfair, that came in their way; and every one who had his wits about him would look out for himself. Such is the morality of the gambling-house!

Through the whole night the gambling goes [illegible] until two or three o'clock; yes, frequently until [illegible] keen morning breeze drives home the wearied [illegible] of the chilly saloons, to dream of cards and dice, [illegible] in feverish excitement to follow a visionary game.

It was three o'clock; nearly all the gamblers [illegible] gathered up and carried off their gold, to lay it [illegible] them as they slept, guarded with loaded [illegible] The lights were mostly extinguished; the [illegible] had long been empty; and only at one of the [illegible] had the gamblers lingered a while for the [illegible] attracting a few stragglers coming out of the [illegible] gambling-houses, and fleecing them, perhaps, of [illegible] winnings they had got elsewhere. This was by [illegible] means a rare occurrence.

One of the owners of the table was standing by it; his money, packed in a strong leathern bag, lay near him; the other man was gone a few steps to take or fetch something, when a Mexican, a little brown-faced fellow, who had stood some time looking in at the door, walked in, took his old torn serape from his shoulders, laid it down, and then walked slowly up the room. The gamblers at first eyed him attentively, but the man had not the appearance of one who had money to spend; what else he wanted there, was no matter to them. The Mexican came up the narrow passage that led to the table, and swerved a little, as if to go by. At this moment, the gambler turned his back to the table, to take up his cloak, and the Mexican, seizing his opportunity, darted to the table, caught up the bag, and was off with it in an instant.

'Thieves, thieves!' shouted the other gambler, who saw with horror what was going on, being quite unable to come to the rescue, on account of the tables and chairs in his way. 'Thieves!' but the Mexican was already at the door, and once out in the dark and empty street, pursuit would be all but hopeless.

The man behind the table turned quickly round at his comrade's voice; his eye first sought the gold—it was gone; but he, too, was hemmed in by chairs and benches, and without spending time in shouting or pursuit, he snatched the ever-ready revolver from his breast-pocket, took steady aim at the flying Mexican, and pulled the trigger.

No second shot was needed; almost at the same moment with the crack of the pistol, the heavy bag dropped upon the floor, and with a cry and a bound, the thief vanished through the door, his steps resounding in the distance as he fled along the street.

'Ha, ha, ha!' laughed the gambler, leaping over the table and stooping to pick up his bag; 'the shot was just in time.'

'Did you hit him, Bill?' cried the other.

'Don't know. I hope I did. I took good aim.'

'Let us look if there is any blood.'

'Pooh, what does it signify?' said the first, carelessly. 'If he has got it they will find him in the street as soon as it is light. Have you the key, Jem?'

'Yes, here. It was monstrously impudent of the fellow; there lies his old serape still.'

'Throw it out; that's right, and now come along. Everybody tries his chance in his own way. If he had done it, he would have been a clever fellow; as it was, he was a fool.'

And the gamblers, the last in the saloon, closed and barred the doors, and climbed slowly up to their bedroom, to win a few hours' sleep from the unprofitable daylight, and recruit their strength for the labours of the next evening.

TABLE PHILOSOPHY.

We had occasion, some time since, to call attention to the subject of 'the Vintages,' as the theme of After-dinner Conversation; and to unveil to the eyes of the more temperate sex the mysteries that are post-prandially celebrated by the ordinary worshippers of Wine and Good Living. It is now our mission to treat of the high-priests of the Superstition; the men who enact laws for the Table; the Philosophers, whose disciples are select, and yet numerous, and whose philosophy is Dining. At the head of these may be placed Brillat Savarin, chief *gourmand* (*i. e.* a man of taste, not a glutton, as the sticklers for his dignity insist) of the last century, and the author of the *Physiologie du Goût*, from which work mainly is compiled the English *Handbook of Dining.** He was born in 1755, at Belley—which seems singular enough—at the foot of the Alps, on the Savoyard frontier of France; he was elected member of the Constituent Assembly, 1789; and afterwards President of the Civil Tribune of the Department de l'Ain. Having fled from the Revolution to New York, he there supported himself as a musician till quiet was restored to his native country. Called to the Court of Cassation, Brillat Savarin, during the leisure of the last twenty-five years of his life, composed his immortal volume. 'The flow of his language,' says his translator, 'won him the hearts of all readers, and disarmed the severest critics. . . . . He caught cold at the funeral of one of his friends, and with his *peculiar fine appreciation of every feeling*, was at once aware that he was a dying man.'

The words we have written in italics comprehend the whole æsthetics of these modern Epicureans. To use a simile that will be familiar to them, the Table Philosophers bear about the same relation to philosophers proper, as apple-jelly bears to guava. To the eye, indeed, these *deliciæ* of the dessert may look pretty much the same, but 'that delicate arbiter, the tongue,' detects the miserable imposition at once, and gives the designing host to know that it is not to be deceived by a mere name—an Appellation. Similarly, the outward semblance of the philosopher is affected to an extreme degree, but with very little success, by these pretenders. They, too, are Sir Oracles, and would have no dog to bark while they are speaking. They, too, invoke Providence upon very slight provocation, when it suits their purpose. 'The Creator, in making it obligatory on man to eat to live, invites him thereto by appetite, and rewards him by the pleasure he experiences;' and when Providence seems, on the other hand, to stand in their way, they contemptuously ignore it. And they, too, philosopher-like, adorn their creed with aphorisms —of a grandiloquent and comprehensive appearance indeed, but which 'when'—to use an American expression, not unallied with the subject—'they come to be fried,' turn out to be the feeblest platitudes.

'The universe without life would be nothing, and all that lives must be fed.

'Animals feed; man eats; the man of intellect alone knows HOW to eat.

'The fate of nations depends upon how they are fed.

'Tell me what you eat, I will tell you what you are.

'Comestibles vary from the most substantial to the most light.

'Beverages range from the mildest to the strongest and most delicately flavoured.'

With respect to which last two remarks at least, it may be added, the same observations apply to aphorisms themselves. Nor are these imposing maxims much surpassed by our author's epigrammatic sayings, such as: 'Cookery is a science; no man is born a cook;' 'A dinner without cheese is like a pretty woman with only one eye.'

There is, however, a really amusing solemnity about the manner in which our Dining Philosopher discourses, not of 'Fate, Freewill, Foreknowledge absolute,' but on the physiology of Taste. He maintains that there are three distinct divisions or orders of this sense—direct sensation, complete sensation, and the sensation of judgment.

'Direct sensation is the first impression from the contact of the food with the organs of the mouth, whilst on the point of the tongue.

'Complete sensation consists of the first sensation, and the impression arising from it, when the morsel of food leaves the first position, passes to the back of the mouth, and strikes the whole organ with its taste and perfume.

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* *The Handbook of Dining.* By L. F. Simpson. Longmans. 1859.

'Finally, the sensation of judgment is that of the mind, which reflects upon the impression transmitted by the organ.

'The man who eats a peach is first agreeably struck by its fragrance; he puts a slice in his mouth, and experiences a sensation of freshness and acidity, which induces him to continue; but it is only at the moment he swallows that the real perfume of the peach is revealed; this is the complete sensation caused by the peach. Finally, it is only when he has swallowed the morsel that he exclaims: "That was delicious."

'The same may be said of a man who drinks a good glass of wine. As long as the wine is in his mouth, he experiences an agreeable, but not a perfect impression. It is only when he has swallowed the liquid that he really can taste, appreciate, and discern the particular perfume of the wine; and then a few minutes must be allowed to the *gourmet* to give vent to his feelings, by "*Peste, c'est du Chambertin!*" or "*Mon Dieu! c'est du Surene!*" Thus your real connoisseur, at every sip, takes the sum-total of the pleasure which another man enjoys when he swallows an entire glass.

'Or let us take another example.

'A doctor orders a man to take a black draught. His nose, a faithful sentinel, warns him of the treacherous liquor he is about to imbibe. His eyes become globular, as at the approach of danger; disgust is on his lips; his stomach rises. He is encouraged by the doctor; he gargles his throat with brandy, pinches his nose, and drinks.

'As long as the detestable beverage fills his mouth, the sensation is confused and supportable; but when the last drop disappears, the sickening flavours act, and the patient makes a grimace which the fear of death alone would warrant.'

We can conceive the indifference of a philosopher of this sort to a glass of water, a thing 'one drinks, one swallows, and that is all;' but we are astonished at his admitting (with reluctance) that 'Taste is not so richly endowed as Hearing; the latter sense can compare divers sounds at the same time, while taste is simple in actuality—which our author is certainly not in expression—and cannot be impressioned by two flavours at the same time.' Nevertheless, 'in the same act of gutturation, a second, and even a third sensation *may* be experienced, which gradually lessens (alas!) and is designated as *arrière-goût*, perfume and fragrance: in the same manner as when a key-note is struck, a practised ear discerns one or more sonances, the number of which has not yet been accurately ascertained.

'Hasty and careless eaters do not discern the impressions in the second degree; they are the exclusive property of a small body of the elect; and it is by their means that they can classify, in order of excellence, the various substances submitted to their examination.

'These fugitive *nuances* of flavour remain for some time on the palate; the professors assume, without being aware of it, an appropriate position, and it is always with an elongated neck and a twist of the nose that they pronounce their judgment.'

May *Gasterea* forgive us, but when we have more than once observed her votaries performing their devotional acts at her altar, the dinner-table, as above described, we had no conception that such was their occupation; we opined that they had a piece of gristle in their windpipe, and have often been upon the point of slapping their backs, or turning them upside down; for the future, we will never assist a choking voluptuary, lest we may destroy, instead, the remnant of a *nuance*.

Seriously, indeed, these gentlemen's idea of heaven must be very similar to that pretended one of Sidney Smith's—'the eating of *pâté-de-foie-gras* to the sound of trumpets.' But it is an absurd affectation in these Slaves of the Palate to pretend to be the possessors of much brain. This elaborate self-indulgence of theirs is no more the attribute of real philosophers, than are the weariness and stupor which characterise some persons of fashion. Nor are we essaying in this matter to break butterflies upon the wheel; these persons are not butterflies, but rather unlovely grubs. We cannot forget how *Amphitryon* and a herd of other such writers inundated the columns of the *Times* with their pompous advice concerning dinner-giving, at the very period when the condition of the Homeless Poor of their country was being so piteously dwelt upon in the same broad-sheet. We can scarcely believe that such a Dives sent even the crumbs from his table to his brother Lazarus.

However, we have no desire to hold up to detestation the memory of M. Brillat Savarin. We are grateful to him for a hearty laugh at the following excerpts from a certain historical elegy of his, and a laugh is good for the digestion, and a good digestion, he assures us, is the *summum bonum* of earthly happiness.

He is following the progress of taste from its earliest dawn, and delights to find that its gratifications increase with 'the progress of the Suns;' yet hear with what a tender pathos he laments over the less fortunate of his fellows, who have lived before their time, and never tasted codfish with garlic at the *Frères Provençaux*, or supped in the fourth story at *Henneveu's*.

'Ye first parents of the human race, whose gourmandise is the province of history, who lost yourselves for an apple, what would you not have done for a turkey stuffed with truffles? But in the terrestrial paradise there were neither cooks nor confectioners. Oh, how I pity you! . . . . Aspasia, Chloë, and all ye whose forms have been immortalised by the chisel of the Greeks, to the great despair of our modern belles, never did your charming lips taste the delicate flavour of a *méringue à la vanille*, or *à la rose*; you scarcely rose to the dignity of gingerbread. Oh, how I pity you! . . . . Invincible paladins, celebrated by troubadours, after slaying giants, delivering fair damsels, exterminating armies, never, alas! never did a black-eyed captive present you with a bottle of Champagne, Mousseux, Malvoisie, Madeira, or liqueurs, creations of "the great century." You were reduced to cherry-brandy or a cider-cup. Oh, how I pity you!'

Nay, our philosopher cannot shut his eyes to the fact, that a day will come, too late for himself to hail it, when all the luxurious condiments of which he boasts, will in their turn be superseded: 'Science is preparing discoveries for the year 1900, such as the extractions from minerals, liqueurs resulting from the pressure of a hundred atmospheres;' but he will never enjoy them; he will never behold 'the importations which still unborn future travellers will bring home from that portion of the globe yet to be discovered and explored.' Oh, how he pities himself!

Vast strides have indeed been taken since Brillat Savarin's time in the art of eating; the institution of *restaurateur*, whose beginning he hails with such triumph, has grown apace, and worked wonders. A man with a few pounds in his pocket may now in truth 'dine like a king.' The advice he has to give concerning dinners suitable to every degree of fortune, has now become almost useless from change of circumstances. *Eprouvettes gastronomiques*—dishes of such recognised flavour, that their apparition alone ought, in a well-organised man, to move all his faculties of taste; so that those who on such an occasion evince no spark of desire, no radiance of ecstasy, ought to be justly noted as unworthy—of a sort which in his day were beyond a Monte Christo, are now by railways brought within the reach of moderate fortunes. It is probable that Soyer may have thought, or said, of Savarin: 'Oh, how I pity you!' Nevertheless, there must have been a tolerable variety to have been got at a first-rate Parisian *restaurateur's*, even in his time, since this is the *carte* of one of them: 12 soups; 24 hors d'œuvre; 20 entrées of beef; 30 entrées of game or fowl; 20 of veal; 12 of pastry; 24 of fish; 15 roasts; 50 entremets; 50 of dessert; with thirty different kinds of wine, and twenty of liqueurs to wash them down with. We will conclude with one aphoristic remark of our author's, which will be new to most persons, and by some will even be disputed. It refers to the ladies as well as to men, and ought, therefore, if a scandal, to be contradicted. Brillat Savarin has, however, himself no sort of doubt of the truth of his assertion, and writes it oracularly, and in a sentence all by itself, thus:

'Whoever says "Truffle," pronounces a grand word, which arouses at once the feelings of both sexes.'

THE GOORKHAS AT LUCKNOW.

The position which we were ordered to attack, and, if possible, carry, will be familiar enough to those who have visited Lucknow by the name of the 'Char Bagh.' It consisted of an extensive enclosure, surrounded on three sides by high brick walls, while on the fourth it was flanked by the canal, which, after describing a semicircle, falls into the Goomtee, at the further extremity of the city. On the opposite bank of the canal—that is to say, on the Lucknow side—the rebels had thrown up a formidable-looking battery, which completely swept the enclosure beyond; while their sharp-shooters, posted in every available cover, were enabled to keep up a withering fire on all those who might be foolhardy enough to venture within range. At early dawn, a brigade of Goorkhas moved out of camp in the direction of the Char Bagh. They were preceded by half-a-dozen pieces of brass ordnance, neither remarkable for their serviceable condition nor their accuracy of range. These guns were drawn by a singular description of the human race, who, it is understood, are a kind of serf or helot among the Nepaulese. They were of short stature, bull necked and round shouldered, clad in dingy rags of every stage of impurity. Caste they have none, and they are in the habit of devouring—doubtless to the scorn and scandal of the Nepaulese—every description of viand which chance might throw in their way. Linked together in couples, like galley-slaves, their duties consist in dragging these cumbrous masses of brass, which they perform with a strength, patience, and dexterity perfectly marvellous; while their behaviour under fire evinces that stoical indifference to death which is so strong a characteristic among the lower orders in India. In rear of the artillery followed the infantry, marching in no 'serried phalanx,' but swarming over the country in a dense, straggling, irregular body, the several regiments distinguished by uniforms of red, green, and blue.

As the column crowns the summit of a rising-ground, over which are thickly scattered villages, gardens, trees, and here and there a large white house shining through the foliage, the city of Lucknow lies stretched before us. But it is in vain that we strain our eyes to catch a glimpse of the capital of Oude; the atmosphere is obscured by thick volumes of smoke and dust, floating over the town, which effectually conceal the fantastic minarets, gilt cupolas, and other whimsical designs of eastern architecture. Now and again, a small spiral column of white smoke shoots up into the sky, accompanied by a loud report. These are the explosion of magazines in the enemy's works, and they appear at this moment to be unusually frequent. The loud, sullen boom of heavy guns, and the rattle of musketry, are distinctly audible to our right, and it is evident that an attack is being made on one of the enemy's positions; but it is only the roar of the artillery, and the sharp ring of the small-arms, which induce us to form this conjecture, for as to knowing what is actually taking place, we might just as well be fifty miles distant from the spot. As we advance down the side of the slope, the rebels bring their guns to bear upon us, and the round-shot flies thick and fast over our heads, or rips open the surface of the earth at our feet, burying itself deep in the soil, with a dull, heavy crash, and throwing showers of dust and earth into our faces. Our guns are brought to the front, and for a considerable space of time it is an exchange of round-shot at long artillery-range, with very little execution on either side; for the dense canopy of smoke and dust which envelops the scene completely screens the belligerent forces from each other's observation. As we sweep onwards, and approach the enemy's position, we are exposed to a flanking fire from a village on the extreme left, which gives us considerable annoyance; and this post must be carried before we can proceed any further. The column halts, and, see! a small body of Goorkhas, detaching itself from the main force, proceeds rapidly in the direction of the village. We watch their advance with much interest. They are within a few hundred yards of the spot; now they have reached it, and we can distinguish the red and blue coats of the Nepaulese disappearing in quick succession amid the long line of low mat-huts which form the village, and hear the rattling volleys of musketry as the combat sweeps down the narrow streets of the hamlet. Suddenly, the whole scene is obscured in one dense rolling column of black smoke, through which occasionally bursts forth a lurid sheet of flame. The rebels have fired the village, and under cover of this are effecting their retreat. And now the order is given for the whole force to advance and carry the rebels' position at the Char Bagh. At that time, but little was known of the defences of this post, and of course we were unaware that the whole interior of the enclosure was swept by the battery erected on the opposite bank of the canal. Buoyed up with the hope of an easy conquest, therefore, the signal for the assault is given, and the Nepaulese battalions pass rapidly to the front, led by several British officers; for the Goorkha officers evince such a decided partiality for the rear of the column, and such an utter disrelish for round-shot and bullets, that the greater portion of these warriors prefer the more undignified though safer retreat afforded by the high brick walls in the background, to earning laurels in the field. The Nepaulese officers, it may be as well to state here, are indeed of a class wholly distinct from the Goorkhas themselves: the great majority of these gentry are *zemindars* (landholders) in Nepaul, and obtain the command of regiments and brigades not from any merit of their own, but from the degree of influence or rank they or their families may possess in their native land. In appearance and disposition they approach nearer than any other race in the East to the weak, effeminate, pusillanimous Bengalee; and whatever virtues they may lay claim to, personal courage cannot, assuredly, be ranked among them. Unattended, then, with a few exceptions, by their leaders, the battalions of Nepaul move rapidly over the plain, and the head of the column is soon close up under the walls of the Char Bagh. In this position, we are almost unmolested, the shot passing over our heads at a considerable altitude. After a brief investigation of the spot, we discover a small opening in one part of the wall sufficiently large for the body of a man to pass through. In single file, and, to say truth, with sundry misgivings on the part of the Goorkhas, we scramble over the narrow pathway, and in a short space of time a couple of hundreds of us are within. Perceiving that the foremost of the column have met with no opposition in their course, the Nepaulese, with a feeble imitation of a British cheer, swarm through the aperture, in the firm conviction that the place is evacuated by the foe. But they are soon undeceived, and in a manner they little anticipated. The battery on the bank beyond, until now masked and silent, suddenly bursts into life like the unexpected eruption of a sleeping volcano. 'Whiz,' 'whiz,' comes the round-shot, crashing through the trees in front, and tearing down huge branches in their destructive career, while the bullets, flying thick and fast, strike the ground with a pattering sound, like the big drops of rain which precede a thunder-shower. A huge mass of iron, hurtling a few inches above our heads, strikes a group of Nepaulese beyond. One man is crushed into a shapeless mass by the mighty thunder-bolt; and several, severely wounded, are borne to the rear. The deafening roar of the artillery, and the sharper 'ping' of the musketry, are all that is now heard, while we can clearly discern the red coats of the sepoys glancing through the thick foliage opposite, or dodging behind the trunks of trees, in order to screen their bodies from fire, and obtain a passing glimpse of their assailants. That small ruined building in front is swarming with the enemy, and we can see many a dark face grouped about the windows, or peering at us round the corners of the dilapidated walls. It affords admirable cover, and from it is kept up a continued and most destructive fire. The Goorkhas fall fast around; and after a hurried attempt at formation, and an incipient essay at a charge, betray such a decided inclination to retreat, that all hope of inducing them to advance seems at an end. The few British officers attached to the force, attempt, by word and gesture, to animate the fainting hearts of the little mountaineers; but it is all in vain. Crouched behind trees, or in the partial shelter which the angles of the walls afford, they appear more anxious to avoid the fast-flying shot than to come to close quarters with their opponents. A few hundred Europeans, a British cheer, a British use of the bayonet, and the position would have been carried, the battery silenced, and the enemy driven from their post; but Goorkhas are not Britons, and the inhabitants of the mountains of Himalaya are not formed of the same stuff as the sturdy islanders of the west. But where are the officers who should have animated their men and rallied their wavering ranks? See that large, unwieldy Nepaulese colonel, who has found his way—probably by mistake—into the enclosure. With his body bent to a curve, and all the insolent assurance of his former demeanour entirely gone, he crouches behind the ample trunk of an adjacent tree, in an ague-fit of terror, and with the tears which cowardice has wrung from his chicken heart coursing down his cheeks, as he overwhelms us with reproaches, censuring our conduct as rash, precipitate, insane, in leading him into such a position, exposed to such a fire! Surely we had some diabolical design on his life! Ah! there comes another round-shot, and down goes his head, like the cork attached to a fisher's line when the treacherous hook has ensnared some unwary victim. The heat is intense, the eyes blinded and inflamed by clouds of dust, while thick and unceasing pours the storm of iron hail. The scattered forces of the Goorkhas no longer wear any semblance of discipline, and are rapidly dwindling away by casualties, and desertions to the rear. A sudden movement is observed among the enemy in front, who, emboldened by our inaction, seem determined to assume the initiative themselves, and a large force is seen advancing towards us, their bayonets glancing through the green foliage of the mango-trees, in a long line of glittering steel. This is enough to turn the already doubtful balance. As the foremost of the foe approach, there is a stir among the Goorkhas, a hesitating pause, a sudden retrograde movement, and then, with a rush, they pass swiftly to the rear, fly through the narrow opening like a flock of startled sheep, and sweep like a torrent into the plain beyond. The panic is great and general; it is *sauve qui peut*, 'the devil take the hindmost;' and in a brief space of time the Char Bagh is occupied by the enemy alone, who hail our departure by firing a *feu de joie*, and uttering loud shouts of defiance. No attempt is made on their part, however, to follow us up; and, once outside, the Nepaulese assume, in some degree, an appearance of order; but so great had been the panic, that on no consideration, we firmly believe, would they have been induced again to venture within that fatal enclosure. The sun had some time since sunk below the horizon, and night was fast gathering round the scene; but instead of returning to camp, which was a couple of miles in the rear, we receive orders to bivouac for the night in the open air. Slowly, and with but little martial appearance, we wheel in beneath a wide-spreading grove of mango-trees; sentries are placed, large fires lighted, and those who have had the precaution to provide themselves with a supply of provisions, proceed to satisfy the cravings of nature. The moon shines brightly down upon the scene, which is wild and picturesque in the extreme. There is a group of Nepaulese soldiers squatted in a circle round a large, cheerful fire, with musket in hand, watching the blaze which illumines their round flat faces, little eyes, and oddly shaped caps, ornamented by some metal emblem of Hindoo superstition, which indicates the regiment to which they belong. There is a good-humoured look about their circular, inexpressive, and dirty visages, which interests the spectator in their behalf. Not far distant are to be seen a heap of 'doolies' (oblong boxes of wood and canvas, with a pole run through the middle), containing the sick and wounded. Squatted on their haunches around these queer-shaped conveyances, are the doolie-bearers, with bare chests, legs, and arms, regaling themselves with the 'hubble-bubble' (small hookah), and passing it round from one to another with true oriental politeness. Food has not passed their lips for more than twelve hours, yet they appear happy and contented, entertaining each other with oriental legends, uttered in their own peculiar patois. A dropping fire of musketry is still kept up at intervals by either party; and the sepoys, flushed by their partial success in the earlier part of the day, have approached within musket-shot of the camp, while by the silver light of the moon the sowars are seen hovering about the skirts of the encampment, or careering in circles in the far distance. All through the night the heavy boom of the British guns on the extreme right, and the rattle of musketry in our immediate vicinity, continue unceasingly; but in spite of the warlike din, we are soon buried in forgetfulness, for, by long habit, one sinks into slumber amid the roar of artillery as calmly as in the hushed bedroom and curtained bed of an English country-house.

TEN MINUTES BEFORE THE TRAIN STARTS.

As, since the application of steam-power, time and tide bide even less for folks than they used to do, and have consequently led to a general improvement in the virtue of punctuality, I have made it a rule to take the former by the forelock, and the latter by the top. Thus, when bound for country travel, I make a point of being at the London station, be it Paddington, Euston Square, London Bridge, or Wellington Road, full five, if not ten minutes before the hour and minute appointed for the whistle-signal and wave of the starting-flag. Many people seem to consider this a waste of time, which they may save at the expense of a prodigious waste of breath—to which I am asthmatically averse—and some amount of sensible perspiration, which I am too old and susceptible of cold to incur. Besides, I am sure to find the waiting-space well occupied with instructive objects, and to derive amusement from the treacherous hurry and ludicrous distresses of my less prudent fellow-travellers.

The world is now such a moving world that it is very difficult to catch folly as it steams, or get a perfect glance at the vapoury cynthia of the minute. Insect-like, the images flit and flutter about, so errantly and transiently, that the philosophical entomologist of human-kind is as glad as his butterfly-hunting compeer to watch for their settling, for ever so short a period, on some spot, and there and then getting an insight into their nature, instincts, habits, and semblances.

Such is my occupation at the terminus, when it happens to be reversed into a starting-post.

The dog-star rages; it is a warm summer afternoon. 5.20 P.M. is on the Railway Guide; and at 5.10 I am at the station, have paid my fare, and am ready to speculate on all comers. As yet, there is only one gentleman besides myself—a clerico-military-looking person, who might be chaplain to the 111th infantry, have written the history of the campaign of 1853, and who is evidently a close observer of the passing panorama. Can he, too, be collecting materials for an article? Distressing thought! He is not making any memoranda, however; and in spite of his keen, intelligent looks, there is a grave sort of concern about his countenance, from which I see no cause to fear competition.

Here come the arrivals, fast and furious. A very handsome landaulet, with the horses sleek and matched to a hair, Coachee's wig of immaculate tobacco-pipe curl, and Plush's locks as stiffly whitened as a cross between baker's dough and plaster-cast can effect; while inside, two crinolines, containing a pair of fat, fair, and forties, beam unruffled satisfaction. The ladies spread themselves upon sofas in the first-class waiting-room; and a very uninteresting pair they are.

The next vehicle is a hired cab, the roof crowded with luggage, and, as far as may be guessed through the window, the inside crammed to an equal extent. There are three females promiscuously interspersed among the hampers, packages, and trunks. The proprietor of all these, a small, mean-looking person, is on the seat with the driver; and, before the horse can well stop in the joy of woe, has leaped down with the agility of a harlequin or man of business, and dragging an extra heavy carpet-bag and bulky chest along with him, darted into the interior. It is then Cabby's concern to enfranchise the ladies, and that of the eldest of the three— the mother of two very plain daughters, independent of surveillance—to look after the baggage, which she sets about with amazing alacrity and fortitude. As the 'items' are clanked down on the pavement, she goes: 'One, two, three, four, five—take care of that, that's glass—six, seven —there's another carpet-bag!' Cabby, in answer: 'The gent. has taken that.' 'All right!—eight, nine, ten—look under the seat, I'm sure there's more.' Cabby: 'The gent. has ta'en a chest, ma'am.' 'All right. Now the top;' the top is lowered to the same tune, and Mrs Careful proceeds: 'Jane, have you got your parasol?—you'll break it!—and the four little parcels? Polly, you have the sandwiches and sherry-wine? All right! Now, let us count the things again. One, two, three—where can your stupid Pa be all this while? Porter, put them things on your truck by themselves. Jane and Polly, go along with him, and see they're kept together, all right. I wonder what that foolish man can be a-doing. Sure-ly, the train will be off before he comes back to pay the cab!' This accident, however, does not happen. Pater familias soon reappears, and after an angry, litigious, and rather abusive wrangle with Cabby—the help-meet for him vacillating violently between resistance *à l'outrance* and terror of the train starting without them—compromises the charge for ultra lading and ultra daughters with a shilling.

Pedestrians come rushing up, almost every one of them as if driven to the latest moment, though a few, glancing at the clock, and noting full five minutes to spare, smile with a gracious reassurance, relax their panting speed, and gulp away their breathless anxiety.

A neat, though evidently a hired brougham, and a shabby-genteel driver, smartly enters the gateway; and out steps a young man, as trim from top to toe as if he had just been turned out of a ready-made 'clothes-warehouse,' and was exhibited as a sample of its cut and fashion. His white kids hand a pretty piece of muslin out of the carriage, and I behold, with pleasure, a smiling countenance, slightly shaded by a border of orange blossoms. The travelling appurtenances were neither bulky nor weighty; all seemed airy and light; the unencumbered world was all before them. The driver touches his hat thankfully, and wishes them good-luck with a chuckle which denotes unusual satisfaction. The happy couple glide into the inner sphere, without bestowing a glance upon aught around. Their conveyance to the moon (honey) is secured, change taken, and check received. 'Intoxicated creatures!' I mentally soliloquise, 'may every change you experience, and every check you encounter, be as harmless and agreeable as the first on this auspicious day.'

Here is quite a home family-party—Papa, Mamma, Tommy, Cary, Arthur, Helen, Alfred, and Baby in attendant nurse's arms. Pa is kept in agitated action between his quiverful of arrows and his rumbleful of baggage; and his distractions are aggravated by the exclamations from Ma, when Tommy is not above ten yards from a wicked pony-chaise just coming up, and Cary and Arthur not quite fifty from the dreadful engine which is to drag them down. As a diversion from these awful risks, the refreshment counter is invaded, and wind-mills, jumping-jacks, Noah's arks, and dolls are thrown down for buns, cakes, tarts, and sweetmeats. How the little gluttons scramble and cram! What large eyes they have got! Now, every one calls for a drink. No wonder! The minors swill lemonade, but Tom insists upon ginger-pop, and, to own the truth, Cary slyly prompts him on her own account; and they are all indulged to the top of their bent. Ma, exhausted, is glad of a glass of cherry-bounce to steady her nerves; and nurse, having nerves also, and being a prodigious favourite, has another, with a biscuit for her share of the confectionary. Pleased and happy, the most of them will be soon asleep, dreaming, it may be, of the games that await them in the country, of nuts and cows, and milk and rabbits!

What a pile of pea-jackets, sou'-westers, Guernseys, roped together hammock-shape, and thrown a-top of an immense iron-girded chest, overload that unlucky animal! yet it pulls up its burden to the curb-stone, and there dismounts from the box a handy stripling in seaman's gear, ready for the lowering of the lading aloft and the alighting of the passengers—namely, the weather-beaten, sunburnt master of the good ship *Telegram*, bound for Australia, and his sonsy wife. The job of transhipping the cargo to the luggage-van being accomplished, the master and mistress separate with a parting kiss, such as a Greenland bear might administer to a walrus full of blubber. There, too, in the far corner, is She waiting for a last look at him on his way to the perilous ocean—his loving and widowed mother, whose sole care he has been from infancy, whose sole hope in this world he is. She has trudged many a weary mile to 'see him off'—to bid farewell, and to pray to God to bless him. Brief is their embrace—an age of feeling in the pressure of a moment. He is hurried into a 'third class,' his oilskin hat pulled down over his brow, his eyes dim with manly tears, and his pale lips quivering with emotion—grasping in his hand the Bible he has just received as her last remembrance.

What tumult and noise! Can it be a mob and riot, and the police and military called out to quell the disturbers of the public peace? O no, it is only the van, with a pack of the Painsbury Hall Academy boys on their way home for the holidays—for home, dear home.

The crowded coach,
The joyous shout, the loud approach,
The winding horns like rams,
The meeting sweet that makes them thrill,
The sweetmeats almost sweeter still—
No 'satis to the jams.'

Marvellous age! The Painsbury Hall well advertised system, 'Train up a child in the way he should go,' seemed to be utterly lost upon these youngsters going by the train. They roar like the boiler, and whistle so like the steam-pipe, as to tempt a movement, till the guard looks out and discovers the imitative cause.

A rapid succession of Hansoms almost drive over each other as they gallop up to the entrance of the grand hall. Single gentlemen leap out with travelling-bags, and pay their fares in an instant. Elderly ladies have invariably to grope to the bottom of their pockets for their purses or porte-monnaies, losing more time in getting them open, and still more in explanations and objections as to distance, before their affair can be finally adjusted—the passengers behind wishing them all the while further off, except certain sprigs of fashion, who appear to be in no greater hurry than if they were dressing for a soirée, and continue to afford full measure to every syllable they drawl out.

Now, too, come other clusters of pedestrians, running and racing as if life or death depend on the next fifty paces, and hastening to the third-class. The poor have little time to spare; they must strive and fag double tides in order to save the latest minute. Not so that stately personage just emerging from the palace hotel, and attended by the obsequious Boots, with his velvet bag and polished gun-case. He has no occasion to hurry himself; the hotel clock times him to a moment. He has not even the trouble to get his ticket; it has been sent for; and, in the enormous spread of wealthy importance, he has but to stride a hundred yards, take his place, and be whirled from luxury to luxury, whithersoever it pleaseth him to command. I could not but be struck by the contrast, as the florid, and whiskered paladin, inclining his conversation benignantly towards the humble Boots, passed majestically along, till, hearing the bell ring, even he had to assume a quicker motion.

Have you seen a tropical snake fix its eyes upon a bird of gorgeous plumage on the bough of a tree, and fascinate it into its envenomed fangs? Neither have I! But I can imagine it. I have seen a partridge cower from a hovering hawk, and I have seen the hawk pounce upon the doomed partridge with a glance so intense, that the flash of a sportsman's fowling-piece boded comparative safety.

Such was the glance of my literary *confrère*, as he darted from behind a column, and such the terror of the magnate from the grand hotel. Nor less swift the pounce. In an instant it was hand to collar, and 'Oh, it is you, Master Rigley! Faith, you are so cleverly made up that, if my information had not been so particular, I should hardly have known you. Well, it's all up now, you know. I will call a cab, and suppose you will go along quietly.' It was no sooner said than done. He held up his finger; a policeman beckoned the conveyance; the partridge hopped in, and the hawk followed. No trick or transformation in a pantomime was ever more deftly executed. A wave of the wand, presto, all had vanished, and the amazed spectator looked upon vacancy.

I paused whether to proceed on my short trip or forfeit my half-crown, and adjourn to see the issue of this singular adventure; my vacillation was determined by the train suddenly evanishing, but, unlike the baseless fabric of a vision, leaving a cloud-capt gorgeous station behind.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Soirees, exhibitions, and conversazioni have abundantly relieved whatever there was of dryness in the learned and scientific meetings of the past few weeks, and thrown an element of peacefulness into the eager talk about war and politics. Painters, whether in oil or water, are again gratifying the eyes of thousands of visitors, more or less successfully. The Society of Arts has opened its annual exhibition of inventions, and it was well worth a visit, being better arranged than in former years, and many of the articles prepared in accordance with the feeling that a thing need not necessarily be ugly because it is useful. There are tents, shells, and contrivances for war; new forms of locks; numerous philosophical instruments; varieties of ornaments and machinery, some remarkably ingenious; a cotton-cleaning machine for use in India; and agricultural implements: among the latter is a patent lawn-mower, exhibited by Mr Samuelson of Banbury, which in mowing lawns will do the day's work of six men in two hours; it is constructed with a brush which keeps the knives sharp and clean, and can be used in any weather.

Mr Wheatstone's improved telegraphic instrument is now in use at the House of Lords, at one of our chief printing establishments, and at the London Docks. It admits of ready application indoors, and in the field; and we are told that the Emperor of the French ordered a pair some two months ago, of such dimensions as would be useful on active service and long journeys. Provided with these, he could flash messages from the front to the rear of his army over a distance of fifty miles.

Mr Allan has been holding a correspondence with the government in favour of a system of telegraphic communication between England and her colonies and foreign possessions, which shall keep clear of the continent. He proposes a submarine line direct from Plymouth to Gibraltar, thence to Malta and Alexandria, and onwards to India. This, as he shews, would render us independent of foreign powers and operators, and enable us to communicate with the more dispatch. Mr Allan would make his cable with a solid copper core, strong enough to resist any amount of strain, whereby it would be stronger and yet lighter than the Atlantic cable laid last July.

There is no doubt that failure has led to essential improvements in the construction of telegraphic cables. Experiments recently made shew that india-rubber is a far better insulator for the wires than gutta-percha, and is not so easily affected by heat and pressure.—Mr Hearder of Plymouth, well known as an authority in matters electrical, says that as engineers have got over the mechanical difficulties of laying a cable, so electricians should overcome the difficulties that hinder its working. As the result of his investigations on the subject, he states that a cable is best fitted for the transmission of a charge when it has a fibrous layer between the wires and the gutta-percha, or between the gutta-percha layers themselves. Flax or hemp would be a suitable material, and at the same time greatly strengthen the cable. 'Such a cable,' says Mr Hearder, 'when made of the requisite dimensions, need not weigh more than six hundredweights per mile in air, or one hundredweight in water; and from experiments made with a sample of an analogous construction, the breaking strain would be upwards of seventeen hundredweights, or equivalent to between 17 and 20 miles of its own length in water. It will be remembered that the Atlantic cable would not support three miles of its own length in water; and I question much if the integrity of its gutta-percha coating could be depended on under the strain of a single mile.'

Further experiments are making with super-heated steam, and with the advantage which we mentioned some time ago—a saving of 30 per cent. The *Valetta*, a steamer belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, has just been fitted with an engine on the super-heating principle, by Mr Penn, and the result is as described. The temperature of steam, as commonly used in engines, is 250 degrees; the super-heating raises it to 350; and it is by an admission of a portion of this to work with the common steam, that the effect is produced. The super-heating, in the present case, is accomplished by a system of pipes in the smoke-box; and we are told that the principle is applicable to all kinds of engines. The coal-bill of the Peninsular and Oriental Company amounts to L.700,000 a year; hence a saving of 30 per cent. will add largely to their profits.

By advices from New York we learn that, although the *Ericson* was a failure on the great scale, the air-engine has nevertheless completely succeeded on the small scale. Up to five-horse power, it is as effectual as steam, and not one-tenth of the cost; so that, in American phraseology, 'the Ericson air-engine is going to wipe every other kind of engine off the slate:' that is, so long as it does not exceed five-horse power.

The International Association for the decimalisation of weights, measures, and coins, are pursuing their labours. The decimal system is to be introduced into our Pharmacopœia, and the term *gram* is to be employed, if a better cannot be thought of.

Sir William Denison, governor of New South Wales, has taken the initiative in proposing to the government here at home, the publication of a work on the zoology, botany, natural history, physical geography, climate, geology, ethnology, &c., of our whole colonial empire. He promises to use his influence in promoting the necessary surveys, in so far as relates to Australia; and hopes that equal willingness will be manifested by all the rest of the British colonies. Our colonial secretary has taken the question into consideration, and we may hope that something will come of it. We may remark, however, that a geological survey of Canada is already in progress under the direction of Sir W. Logan, and with highly valuable results, as appears by the published reports. There is also a geological survey going on in India, of which the second volume has just been distributed from the India House to scientific societies in England. It contains well-written and detailed reports on special districts by competent hands, describing the mineral resources, and is well illustrated by wood-cuts and lithographs. These are good instalments towards the great publication recommended by Sir William.

A paper read at the Institution of Civil Engineers, 'On the Permanent Way of the Madras Railway,' gave rise to a discussion in which certain facts were mentioned which appear to be generally interesting. The simplest form of construction is preferred—that is, screwing the rails directly down upon wood-sleepers, because the natives are much given to steal chairs, 'fishes,' and bolts. It is believed that cast-iron sleepers will be found preferable to wood, especially in hot climates. Iron sleepers answer best in Egypt; and a form known as 'trough-sleepers' and 'cup-sleepers,' having no chair or projecting parts, has been tried for some years on one or two of the main lines running out of London, and with success. On the Midland Railway they were laid near to the Derby station, 'where they were subject to a traffic of 550 engines, 2400 wagons, and 120 carriages every twenty-four hours;' which may be regarded as a pretty severe test. Sleepers of Scotch fir, properly creosoted, have been found quite sound at the end of sixteen years. Better still is the yellow pine brought from St John's, New Brunswick, which, after twenty years' use in docks at Liverpool and Sunderland, remains sound and unaltered; and, so far as experience goes, creosoted timber is not attacked by the teredo.

A few miscellaneous matters relating to foreign parts are worth notice. A breakwater is to be built in Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope, where such a protection has long been needed; and as it will be constructed under the direction of Mr Coode, the engineer of the Portland Breakwater, mariners may count on seeing a safe harbour created on that southern end of Africa.—A company has been formed to demonstrate that mahogany and sugar can both be cultivated in Honduras with considerable profit.—Another, to import flax from India, where, as is said, it can be grown in any quantity in the Punjaub. It appears that the late adventurous discoveries in Australia, of which we gave a passing notice, have opened a new tract of twelve million square miles of grass-land.—The Russians are about to establish three English life-boats on the coast of Finland; and one is to be introduced on the Lake of Geneva.—The great oceanic survey is in future to include records of littoral earthquakes and those felt at sea; and a magnetic observatory is to be set on foot at Pekin, as soon as possible after the establishment of our embassy in that city.—Dr Falconer, one of our foremost geologists, has explored the caves in the neighbourhood of Palermo, and discovered some highly significant geological facts, of which we shall hear something on his return home ere long.

The Sardinian government have promised to extend aid and protection to English *savans* who may wish to encamp on the Alps, for the sake of studying the glaciers. Apropos of this subject, the theory so ably advanced and illustrated fifteen years ago by Professor Forbes, as to the motion of glaciers—namely, that a glacier is a viscous fluid urged down a slope by the mutual pressure of its parts, precisely after the manner of a water-torrent or river, the centre moving more freely and rapidly than the sides, and the top than the bottom, while the whole is thrown into a vertically laminated structure, as if composed of thin upright bands, differently coloured, like veins in marble, as the result of a struggle between the rigidity of the ice and the *quasi-fluid* character of the motion impressed upon it—was challenged two years ago by Dr Tyndall and Professor Huxley, in consequence of some experiments which they had conducted on a small scale, shewing the frangibility of ice into small pieces under pressure, and the readiness of these to be instantly refrozen. This has led the indefatigable professor—and how zealously active he has been, under all the disadvantages of imperfect health, no one beyond a limited circle of friends can ever fully know or appreciate—to republish his minor writings on the subject of Glaciers, in one volume, in order to shew that Dr Tyndall's results are confirmatory, not contradictory, of his theory. The book forms a ready means of acquiring a knowledge of this very interesting branch of physics, and, as exhibiting an example of earnest investigation, it is more than instructive—it is deeply interesting.

Natural philosophy at the Royal Institution has been relieved by a course of lectures on Italian Literature by Signor Lacaita, and by Mr Layard 'On the Seven Periods of Art'—a lecture to each. The Rev. Walter Mitchell's lecture, 'On a New Method of rendering visible to the Eye some of the more Abstruse Problems of Crystallography, hitherto considered only as Mathematical Abstractions,' will perhaps excite the admiration of crystallographers all over the world; because, with the mechanism employed in illustration, the lecturer shews that outlines of forms and systems of angles may be produced at pleasure, even three-faced octahedrons and rhombic dodecahedrons.—Dr Angus Smith's lecture, 'On the Estimation of the Organic Matter of the Air,' is important in a sanitary point of view. With a solution of chameleon in a proper apparatus, he shews that it is possible to detect and measure the smallest quantities of organic matter in the atmosphere; and the general result of his experiments confirms the views developed by researches within the past twenty years, as to the impurity of the atmosphere of towns. Heat, he says, tends to increase the amount; dryness, to diminish; rain, in warm weather, perhaps by washing the air, diminishes; and by this test 'it is easy to tell, when in the outskirts of a town, whether the wind is blowing from the town or the country.' It is remarkable, too, that in Manchester 'a distinct difference was always found between the front and back of a house.' A full account of all the experiments is to be published, which perhaps will do something to remove the indifference that most persons feel towards evils which are not directly recognisable by the senses. Dr Smith speaks wisely on this matter, in a passage which we take leave to quote. By this method, he says, 'we may find that every wind will have attached to it its mark of unwholesomeness with respect to this test, and that every season also will have its co-efficient. It may also be found that changes of season or of condition of the air will be ascertained with much more certainty, delicacy, and rapidity than now. We may even hope to find some premonitory symptoms of disease in the atmosphere before it affects the human body; the exciting cause itself existing long before it has been able to take effect, so that useful precautions may be made in time, and an efficient defence prepared. At the same time, no proof whatever has yet been given that a plague or any infectious disease can be estimated by it, although reason has been given for such an expectation, while the air over different fields differs enough to promise some knowledge of miasm.'

We see, with pleasure, by the Postmaster-general's Fifth Annual Report, that the post-office continues to flourish: the whole number of post-offices in the United Kingdom is now 11,235. The number of letters sent in 1858 was 523 millions, being 19 millions more than in 1857, and 447 millions more than in 1839, the year before the introduction of penny-postage. The total amount sent by money-orders was £12,662,105. The number of persons employed is 24,372; and the gross revenue for the past year was £3,100,939, out of which the net revenue is set down as £1,330,385.

BURNS'S PISTOLS.

A curious dispute has arisen regarding the pistols which Burns gave to his Dumfries physician, Maxwell, on his death-bed, as the only fee in his power to confer. Bishop Gillis, of Edinburgh, having given what he believed to be these pistols to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, to be deposited in their Museum, an anonymous writer in the *Illustrated London News* of February 5, brought forward a letter from James Hastings, Liverpool, which stated confidently that Burns's pistols had come from Dr Maxwell to a friend of the writer, whose grandson had lately migrated to America, taking these relics along with him. The writer of the paragraph went on to say that neither of these pair of pistols was genuine. The real pistols given by Burns to Maxwell 'were bought in 1834 by Allan Cunningham, the poet, and are still in possession of the poet's widow. . . . . Allan put them into a very handsome box, with a suitable inscription. Then he added, not very courteously, 'Will the Scottish Antiquaries continue to exhibit their newly acquired—treasure, shall we call it?' Dr Gillis has been induced to take some trouble in expiscating the history of Burns's pistols, and by a most elaborate series of evidences,[*] has proved that both the pistols taken to America by Mr Hastings's friend, and the pair possessed by Allan Cunningham, were pairs bought at the sale of Dr Maxwell's effects in Dumfries, in 1834, not as Burns's pistols at all, the latter, indeed, being a very common sort of pair, for which the price paid was no more than *fifteen shillings and sixpence!* He has equally proved that the actual pistols of Burns were reserved by Dr Maxwell from his sale, were brought by him to Edinburgh, and bequeathed to his friend Mr Menzies of Pitfoddels, and are—not the pair given to the Society in January last—a wrong pair having been taken up by the bishop in mistake—but a pair now laid on their table—a treasure, we *shall* call it, which the Scottish Antiquaries mean to continue to exhibit as the Pistols of Burns, whatever resolution may be arrived at by the possessors of the other two pair.

IF I MIGHT BE A BIRD.

If I might be a bird, I'd be a lark,
And bathe my pinions in the early light,
Ere jealous Sol half draws the mantle dark
From off the shoulders of the jewelled Night.

I'd be a lark, that freedom-loving bird;
Lowly my nest, but high my crimson throne;
My passion-notes, with silent rapture heard
By spell-fixed list'ners on the breezy down.

I'd be a lark; his heart is aye in tune;
I've heard him carol on a winter's day,
Blithely as when the rosy arms of June
Clasped to her glowing breast the first-mown hay.

I'd be a lark, the laureat of the sky,
The visitor of violet fields above;
And, like him, never turn a scornful eye
Down on the meads that sheltered my true love.

J. K.

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[*] *A Paper on the Subject of Burns's Pistols.* By the Right Rev. Bishop Gillis. Edinburgh: Marsh and Beattie. 1859.

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PAROCHIAL NEWSPAPERS.

In almost every district of the metropolis, as well as in many of its suburbs, there are now established one or more local newspapers, wherein the World is represented in little; where the Rectors are as Archbishops—sometimes pillars of piety, sometimes 'bloated ecclesiastics'—the Board of Guardians as Peers of the Realm, the Vestrymen as Members of Parliament; where an unruly Pauper is exalted into a dangerous Demagogue; and the Representative of the Borough is portrayed, according to the politics of the paper, either as the most abominable tyrant, or the most heaven-born monarch that ever swayed the destinies of Littleton, or (if it be a suburban district), ruled fertile Narrowmead.

The leading articles, whether levelled against the waste of public money in repairing the town-pump, or adjuring all loyal and noble natures to stand by Jenkins in the coming struggle for the beadleship, are crushing in their severity, and impressive in their type—which is generally a good deal larger than that of the leaders in the *Times*. The letters of *Conservator*, directed against the late innovations practised by the gas committee, only yield in indignation and italics to the fiery sarcasms of *Libertas*, who has (always) 'yet to learn' that the tyrannous monopoly of a water-company is to be endured for ever. Strafford is born again in a poor-law guardian; and Hampden is revived, with even more than his original fervour, in a recalcitrant rate-payer.

All these journals, whether in town or country, are started 'to supply an obvious void in local literature;' the *Narrowmead Argus*, as we perceive, for one, although the *Narrowmead Mercury*, which preceded it, seems to entertain a totally different opinion upon that subject. Nothing in the annals of newspaper warfare can indeed exceed the fury with which the combat between these rival periodicals is waged. Both have agents (gratuitous) and correspondents (voluntary) over the whole length and breadth of Narrowmead parish; no subject—that is to say, no parochial subject—is too great, or, on the other hand, too small, to be grappled with by their truly catholic spirit. They have each 'exclusive information' upon every imaginable topic. All is fish that comes to their net in the vext ocean of local affairs, and they have not seldom very pretty pickings besides, in the mud they stir up at the bottom. We happen to enjoy the acquaintance of the talented conductor of the *Narrowmead Argus*—the author, it may be observed, of these magnificent letters signed 'The Younger Brutus,' addressed, strategically, to himself in his own columns—and are therefore in a position to speak particularly concerning that organ, although we by no means rely upon our friend's account of the manner in which the *Mercury* is conducted.

'I need not say,' remarked this gentleman complacently, when, on a late occasion, we were alone together in his suburban villa, and after he had taken more than one glass of toddy, which I had mixed for him after the northern manner—'I need not tell you that to manage a literary concern of this character, a man must be possessed not only of considerable intellectual attainments, and of an almost infallible judgment, but must have a graceful and sprightly style as well.

'It is not every writer who can pen a eulogium upon chilblain liniment—for instance—which may stand on its own merits as an artistic sketch, and yet be an advertisement as well.

'I flatter myself, I understand these things. When the Messrs Whitebare, hair-cutters here, wished Us to recommend their bear's grease as the only really genuine production of that nature to be obtained south of the Arctic Circle, I believe that I gave them satisfaction. It was quite an interesting paper—that advertisement—beginning with some curious missionary experience among the Esquimaux, and going on to treat scientifically of the Pole, with some humorous remarks upon the human poll, and so, by the easiest and most natural transition possible, to the Messrs Whitebare, High Street.

'I don't like to know too much of these things—especially before bestowing on them this sort of approbation—and I had just as soon not have had that present of thirteen shilling-pots of the mixture from the grateful hairdresser, as an additional reward for my exertions. If I had tried a specimen before I wrote the essay, my pen would have refused its office, or, at all events, performed its functions much less successfully. That 's the worst of having such an exceedingly delicate conscience. Now, the editor of the *Mercury* would no more hesitate about praising an article he knew to be filthy as well as deleterious—if he got the money in advance, that is—than he would refuse a new subscriber to his miserable paper, and *that* he is not likely to get in a hurry, I think. One lives and learns, of course, with regard to all these matters: for example, I shall never forget when I first entered upon my responsible duties, a certain visit which was paid to me by old Druggem, the chemist, with reference to the Narrowmead Mixture. He praised it to that extent, when I sat broiling in my little den one summer day, as an effervescent and refreshing drink in hot weather, that I said I was sure I should do the advertisement better if he were to send me half-a-dozen, and I were to drink them, first.

"Why, no," said he, "I don't think you had better do that, for particular reasons;" and these, with a hideous leer upon his pharmacopœical countenance, he presently confided to me. The ginger-beer vintage had failed with him, it seemed, that June, and he had about sixty dozen of spoilt "Pop" under his shop-counter: with this he had mingled some mulberry-juice, to impart to it a new tone and colour; he himself had bestowed upon it a name—the Narrowmead Mixture—and he had come to me to concoct for it a reputation. That panegyric was, however, in consequence of this indiscreet avowal, about the flattest thing I ever wrote, although there was an appropriate Persian air enough about the imagery, when I compared the thing to sherbet, and brought in some impressive allusions to the Prophet Mohammed. The concluding idea, indeed, of the United Kingdom Temperance Alliance presenting a medal to Druggem for having superseded, by the invention of this delightful compound, the use of spirituous liquors, was, I am bound to acknowledge, much better conceived than executed.

'Advertisements such as these require taste, and skill, and fancy; nay—if I may say so—perhaps no small amount of Genius; and they are, besides, our most important consideration. But you may well suppose that the *Narrowmead Argus* has other departments likewise. The Muse has a column to herself in every number, and a poet—which, by the greatest luck in the world, my eldest boy happens to be—is literally kept upon the premises. It is quite astounding to observe the remarkable fecundity of that lad in supplying us with works of the imagination. Upon the day we go to press, I have only to holloa down the speaking-tube: "Jack, a sonnet, my boy, as quick as you can," or, "Jack, our meteorological observer has not sent in his copy; we must have a couple of pages from you at least," when up comes the fourteen lines, or the little epic, as the case may be, just as though the lad were a word-organ, and ground his verse to order.

'That meteorological observer of ours, although unpunctual, is exceedingly useful to us, and is certainly a most indefatigable son of science. I have my doubts whether he does not live exclusively out of doors. The way in which he goes about, stooping, and crawling, and climbing, in order to capture the temperature, wherever it may be, is amazingly praiseworthy, and all the more so as he does not get anything for it—except, as I should suppose, unlimited rheumatism. Just look at this report of his, of a month or two back, and then tell me if the man who acts barometer to the *Times* puts himself to half the trouble which our observer takes: "Number of nights at two feet from the ground, at or below 32° F., twenty-one; number of nights at or below 32° F., on the grass, twenty-five; mean amount of terrestrial radiation, 4·3; greatest heat in sunshine, 88°"—where our meteorological observer must have got a *coup de soleil*—"mean degree of humidity, saturation being the unit, ·93"—where our observer must have caught bronchitis at the least. The scientific information which was supplied by this invaluable ally to the *Argus* concerning the eclipse of last year, was of a character which required him to correct his own proofs, I can assure you. I hope it was all right at last; but I confess to the editor's being completely in the dark about it; while our compositor and a half—for we keep a man and a boy—were well-nigh frenzied.

'Among the natural phenomena of the eclipse, he observed, he said, these facts—that the pigeons retired to rest during the temporary darkness; that the cats made those unpleasant disturbances which are commonly confined to the hours of the night; and that the winter-flowers which are accustomed to shut up their blossoms at eve, were taken in by the unusual aspect of the sun. This last remark, however, was not properly in his department, but rather belonged to that of our botanical correspondent, who is also one of the most painstaking of his species. He is much more popular with our readers, particularly with our lady-readers, than his *collaborateur*, since he knows all the banks whereon the wild thyme grows—and, indeed, where everything else grows, from the vernal water-starwort to the hairy bitter cress. Not only does he supply to the various flowers these astonishing names, but he gives to each its local habitation. The colt's-foot is to be found, he says, in numbers on Narrowmead pasture; the common moschatel, in the lane behind Smith's wine-vaults; lords and ladies in profusion upon the race-ground; the cuckoo pint, in the field beyond the Toper's Arms; the ground ivy, in the back-yard of the green-tea establishment of Mixorts & Company; and the lady's smock (a sort of air-plant), very numerous in Scrubbem's drying-ground.

'We have an entomologist, also, as an occasional contributor; but the general effect of him, I think, is more to make our readers' flesh creep than anything else.

'Archæology and antiquities form no slight share of the good things we have to offer to our subscribers. Narrowmead in the time of the Druids; Narrowmead under the Heptarchy; Narrowmead during the civil wars—every description, in short, of back-view which Narrowmead has to offer, has been faithfully daguerreotyped from the imagination or erudition of our historical correspondent. Narrowmead Church, it is almost needless to mention, has long been in our columns the home of the literary jackdaw, the hunting-ground of all antiquarian sportsmen; while Narrowmead Tower, which is now put up to auction annually, to be bidden for by enterprising toll-gate keepers, has been proved, in our pages, incontestably, to have been the palace, the prison, the birthplace, or the scene of dissolution of a long array of celebrated characters, from the Earl of Warwick (surnamed the King-maker) to Dr Johnson; and from Mary Queen of Scots to the scarcely less notorious Mrs Manning.

'These comprise the principal literary staff to whom the *Argus* looks for permanent contributions; but we have countless correspondents besides. Of these, Publicola Junior and the Younger Brutus—ahem!—are perhaps the most remarkable. The former gentleman, referring, only the other day, under the head of "Coming Elections," to the parochial suffrages for a new churchwarden and another constable, used language so indignantly heroic, that he was very nearly getting me horsewhipped, and at this present moment he lies under an indictment for a libel upon the local Board of Health. If I had not given the offender's name up with great presence of mind, at the first hint of danger, the *Argus* itself would be figuring, in the person of its editor, at the bar of offended justice. Both these gentlemen, however, infuse a certain raciness into the paper which it could ill afford to lose; and in the very rare instances where there is nothing of a public nature to be made a target for their noble scorn, they are good enough to attack one another with the greatest acrimony in adjacent columns.

'For sermons delivered for the benefit of philanthropic societies, for lectures administered gratis at our mechanics' institute, the *Narrowmead Argus* has always the most fervid praise. This is, however, partly attributable to the fact, that the preachers andlecturers are accustomed to send to our columns their own remarks upon their own performances, which are rarely found to be deficient in genial appreciation. The rest of our newspaper is neatly but unambitiously filled up with notices of the times of departure and return of the Narrowmead railway omnibus.'

'And the *Mercury?*' inquired we with a smile.

'The *Mercury*,' responded our talented friend, rising from his chair with difficulty, steadying himself with his left hand against the corner of the table, and extending his right in a Ciceronic manner towards the crockery cupboard—'the *Narrowmead Mercury* is, as its classical name implies, were its ignorant conductors but aware of it, a Thievish Eavesdropper, deriving its scanty information from key-holes and the like illegitimate channels, and sapping the foundations of all that we hold great and venerable'—— And, in fact, our friend anticipated the best part of a withering leader of his own, which thunderbolt was already set up in gigantic type, and burst forth from the office of the *Argus* upon the ensuing morning.

THE DEATH-BRINGER.

TOWARDS the end of Maria Theresa's reign, when the empress-queen had finished her wars, got most of her family married, and established strict etiquette at court, there appeared among the rank and fashion of Vienna a lady, whose comings and goings were more anxiously watched, and more earnestly talked of, than ever were those of envoy or ambassador. She was neither young nor beautiful, clever nor rich, but a *stift-dame* or pensioner of one of those institutions so abundant in Germany, which were founded by the munificence of early magnates for the education and maintenance of the undoweried branches of their family-trees. Madame von Enslar, as the lady was called, though yet in single blessedness—for the madame came with the stift—was on the shady side of fifty, of unquestionably noble birth, had been maid of honour to the empress when she was archduchess, and could still boast of a place in her majesty's memory; yet no *fräuline*, introduced for the first time to the family of her intended, could have been more amiable. What was still better, everybody believed that Madame von Enslar's amiability was a genuine article. Had her head been detachable, any acquaintance might have borrowed it. Whoever was in difficulties, might count on her help or counsel, and madame was not a bad adviser; but her chosen field of labour, and, it seemed, of delight, too, was the sick-room. Beside the night-lamp or in the darkened chamber, madame was at home in anybody's house. Her quiet ways, her unwearied care, and her unquestionable abilities in the manufacture of soups, jellies, and all other comforts for the indisposed, made her a perfect treasure to all who intended to keep their beds for some time; but, strange to say, there were people in Vienna who would rather have seen the most slatternly hospital-nurse at their bedsides. The morals of the Austrian capital have never stood high, and superstitious terrors are the natural accompaniments of such society. How it originated, nobody could tell; but a whisper gradually crept into boudoir, drawing-room, and down the back-stairs, that wherever madame went to nurse and tend the sick, death was sure to follow her. Examples of the fact might be heard in every circle. Had not the young Countess Valsenburg been a second Hebe for youth and health, till madame went to nurse her in the cold she caught at her Imperial Majesty's Christmas reception? yet the cold turned to a rapid consumption, and the countess joined her ancestors in the family-vault before Easter. Did not the canoness of Stofenhaim look rather too rosy for a lady so nearly connected with prayer and fasting, till she sprained her ankle in the Ash-Wednesday procession, and madame came with that inestimable poultice invented by the doctor of her *stift*. Nobody ever saw the canoness looking rosy after that. One turn of sickness followed another, and her funeral went out with the last leaves of the summer. Did not the old Baroness von Hardenbach belong to one of the toughest families in all Austria, till madame began to make embrocations for the rheumatism she had every winter, and her heirs were agreeably surprised by having to provide mourning six weeks after? Similar instances were on record among the poor whom the amiable stift-dame visited. The servants for whom she prescribed, and the tradesmen in whose families she took an interest—doctors, lawyers, and priests—all believed in this bad-luck; but nobody undertook to explain her connection with the King of Terrors. That she had a criminal hand in the business, could not be even imagined. Besides having no motive for anybody's removal, no legacy to expect, no rival to get rid of, Madame von Enslar was a frank, honest, good-natured soul, the very opposite of all who ever dealt in poisons.

Nevertheless, she visited the sick, and the sick died; the whisper was loud in the city, but low in the court. Though Prince Kannitz, that mighty minister who never permitted the decease of anybody to be mentioned in his hearing, had also forbidden the utterance of her name; though Joseph II. had consulted Mesmer on the subject, it was said without effect, the empress-queen would not acknowledge the existence of such tales. Madame had been her maid of honour, and her confessor was the lady's distant relation. To believe anything more than her imperial majesty would have been a decided infraction of etiquette. The Viennese world of fashion was therefore obliged to content itself with retailing those startling facts under the seal of secrecy, and keeping its own maladies from coming to madame's ears; but in proportion as the stift-dame was a terror to its brave and fair, when themselves were concerned, so did she become their hope and confidence in the case of old and wealthy relations, troublesome dependents, creditors, obstructors, some said spouses—in short, anybody whom it was desirable to get out of the way.

It is proverbial that those most concerned in a report are generally the last to hear it. Madame von Enslar went on attending masses, making clothes for the poor, and compounding good things for the indisposed, without the slightest idea of the hopes and fears which hung upon her visits. From her youth, which the world now around her regarded as a long past and primitive time, she had lived in the Stifthouse—an establishment where young ladies were educated, and older ones dwelt in a somewhat conventual fashion, with daily prayers, solemn observance of fast and festival, and great execution done in needlework and cookery. Whether it were the practice of stifthouses in general, of madame's in particular, or the lady's own disposition that obtained such credit, certain it was that she had come to the capital after residing the appointed twenty years under the stift-mother's superintendence, with the neat black dress and gold crucifix of the institution, and no tendency whatever to intrigue, scandal, or curiosity touching her neighbours' affairs. The good woman was congratulating herself on the excellent health with which her friends were blessed, in the third winter of her sojourn at Vienna. None of all her acquaintances would acknowledge that they or theirs were ill, or likely to be so; the poor whom she visited were equally free from complaints; her own and her friends' servants declared themselves in a most satisfactory condition; when a transaction occurred which convinced even the empress-queen, and enlightened madame on the mysterious part of her own history.

The archbishop of Salzburg was one of the richest churchmen in the empire. He had estates both in Austria and the Tyrol, large deposits in the imperial bank, revenues from shrines, bridges, and highways; his vineyards produced the best wine; his park contained the finest game, and his country-house was delightfully situated on a rising-ground overlooking the Danube, and within two German miles of Vienna. There Ludwig Firstenfield lived in princely splendour and high favour with Maria Theresa. Almost forty years before, when a rival *kaiser* had been crowned at Linz—when her right was assailed by all the princes who had promised to maintain it—when the Holy See stood prudently aloof, to see which side should win, he had gallantly championed her cause in and out of canonicals, canvassed the states of Hungary, gave sage counsel in the imperial closet, and advanced money for carrying on the war. The wisdom which the archbishop had displayed in those days of uncertainty, made his advice so necessary to the empress-queen, that he rarely visited his palace in Salzburg, or his castle in Swabia, but resided chiefly at his country-house, within reach of the court, the theatres, and the news. His grace received the best company in Vienna; her majesty and all the imperial family honoured his state-balls with their presence; he had the choicest pictures, the rarest china, the most select conservatories, and his mansion was kept in all sorts of propriety by the administration of Madame Segandorf, his widowed niece, and her three grown-up daughters. Madame Segandorf's husband had been a count of the Austrian Netherlands. His estates were lost partly in the war with France, and partly at French hazard. Mother and daughters had consequently no provision becoming their rank, but they were all amiable, accomplished, and devotedly attached to their wealthy uncle.

The spiritual lord of Salzburg was verging on seventy-five, but still a stately figure at the levée, and a dreaded antagonist at the chess-board. As became an archbishop so high in imperial favour, he was believed to be endowed with every virtue. The court-poets spoke of his canonisation as an event to be expected; the inferior clergy agreed that his residence in the bowers of Paradise was ready. Nevertheless, Ludwig Firstenfield was in no hurry to leave his choice tokay, his first-rate venison, and his elegant country-house, of which he gave a convincing proof by keeping its doors steadily closed against Madame von Enslar. The archbishop did not believe the idle tales that were afloat, any more than his imperial patroness; after her majesty's example, he did not even notice them, and greeted the stift-dame, when he met her in society, with almost paternal kindness. Yet, while his hospitalities were extended to rich and poor, home-born and foreign, who had the smallest pretensions to noble blood, madame was never invited within his walls or grounds.

The lady would have been probably content to see herself thus overlooked for life, but it did not tally with another lady's plans. In a moment of amiable weakness, some years before, the archbishop had permitted his niece to learn that his will was made in favour of herself and her daughters. There were none of them growing younger. The grafs and counts to whom the junior ladies aspired, somehow found out that no dowry could be expected till their uncle's death, and were not in haste to propose. Madame Segandorf, being still a fine woman, had considerable calculations on an old prince with heavily encumbered estates and a habit of incessant gambling, and while her solicitude regarding the health and welfare of her dear uncle daily increased, she left no stone unturned to get the stift-dame invited to his country-house. Even the efforts of widows are not always crowned with success. The praises of madame's piety, humility, and unbounded reverence for his grace, were sounded without effect. Then madame herself was stirred up to make advances. It was a pity the archbishop should neglect her so; somebody must have prejudiced his mind against her; there were always ill-natured people in the world; perhaps they had led him to believe that she was careless of his good opinion and great interest at court. It might be well to get in his way at times, talk of his most celebrated pictures, and hint a strong desire to see them. These stratagems, and many more, were tried, but all in vain. His grace would take no hints, and hear no insinuations. Poor madame, constantly reminded of the fact, began to think it the black cloud of her life that she was shut out from his country-house; complained of it to all her acquaintances, grieved over it in secret, and was thinking of offerings to the most benevolent saints on the subject, when by chance she hit on a more direct expedient.

Passing through the Jews' quarter in one of her missions of charity, she saw hanging in the shop of a noted dealer in second-hand garments a magnificent morning-gown of crimson damask, flowered with gold. Being a woman, the stift-dame was taken captive by its grandeur. Moreover, it looked perfectly new. The archbishop had a special liking for splendid attire; and if, as Solomon told her, a gift made room for a man, such a present would certainly secure a lady place at his board and in his ball-room. The Jew's price was low compared with the actual value of the robe; it had come into his hands by some chance of trade, and did not suit his customers. Yet decidedly cheap as it was, the cost would leave madame nothing to offer that Christmas at the shrine of Our Lady, who happened to be the patron-saint of her stift. However, the archbishop's good graces were in prospect. Madame went straight home for all her savings, paid for the magnificent morning-gown, saw it safely packed up, and felt herself an already invited guest, when it was deposited, box and all, in a private cupboard, to be seen by nobody till it was despatched to the country-house, as a Christmas gift for his Grace of Salzburg.

Christmas was the archbishop's birthday, which returned for the seventy-fifth time that year, and [illegible] determined to celebrate it with more than usual [illegible]tivity. The uttermost branches of his family were invited months before, and gladly obeyed the summons of their rich and reverend relative. They came from the hills of Bohemia, and the plains of Lombardy; from the frontiers of France, and the borders of Russia; for the house of Firstenfield was numerously represented; and wherever the [illegible] sceptre ruled, there were its boughs to be found flourishing in the law, in the church, or in the army. Gifts came in as well as friends—when did a rich man's birthday lack presents?—but among them there was nothing so splendid, nothing so much to the archbishop's taste, as the magnificent morning-gown, sent just as it came from the Jew's shop, by the hand of a trusty messenger, with a note which it had cost the stift-dame two sleepless nights to compose. His grace was delighted, and all his assembled relations envied the lucky sender, except Madame Segandorf, who returned to her praises with fresh vigour, hinted that she feared the poor lady had but a lonely Christmas; everybody had not a dear, kind uncle like her and her girls. The archbishop took no notice of these grateful remarks, but as the present had arrived on the eve of the festival, he did madame the honour of wearing it at his birthday levée.

Everybody admired the morning-gown. The sports of the day, the morning mass, and the evening banquet, all went off well. The bishop's health was drunk in old Austrian fashion—good wishes, predictions, and prayers for length of days and increase of dignity, even to the cardinal's hat, were made on his behalf; but before the rejoicings were fairly over, it was observed that his Grace did not look quite well. Next morning, he was decidedly indisposed; his anxious relations, not knowing the state of his will, remained in the house to see what turn the illness would take; but first, Madame Segandorf sickened also; then her daughters, one after another; then the cousins, cousins-in-law, noble ladies, and high officials who had assembled round the bishop's festive board, began to complain, and retire to their chambers. Half the physicians of repute in Vienna were in full action at the country-house. At first, they thought something might have gone wrong at the banquet, and a strict search after poison was commenced; but in a short time it became evident that the disease was small-pox. The dread and devastation which attended that malady over all Europe in the eighteenth century, are matters of history. It was the desolater of palace and cottage, and the plague of preceding ages had no such terrors for men. In the bishop's country-house, its visitation came with a malignity never equalled. All who sickened, died; all who fled were seized on their homeward ways. The prelate himself survived the widow and her daughters, who had been in such haste for his testament, only a few days; and before the new year was a month old, the numerous house of Firstenfield was so diminished, that its large possessions fell to three poor priests and an old doctor of laws, who, by common consent, built a monastery for the brothers of Lazarus on the site of the elegant country-house.

The court and the public woke up as they seldom wake in Austria. A strict investigation regarding the stift-dame's present was set on foot, and by the perseverance of the police it was discovered to have formed part of the wardrobe of Louis XV., and been worn for the first time in the attack of small-pox which finished his reign. As usual in those times, everything worn by his departed majesty on that occasion was supposed to have been burned; but the magnificent morning-gown tempted a covetous valet: he saved it from the fire; sold it to a travelling Jew, under a stipulation never to shew it on French ground: thus it had found its way to Vienna, and been purchased by the unlucky Madame von Enslar. The sifting of the transaction not only confirmed the public belief in her connection with the last enemy, but induced the empress-queen to command her immediate retirement to her stifthouse, which she never again quitted; and it is said to have given currency to a popular superstition, which still prevails in Upper Austria, where every out-of-the way village has some tale regarding the unconscious powers of some old man or woman known as the Death-bringer.

MORAL SKETCHES FROM THE BIRD-WORLD.*

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

Not with the magnifying-glass of science, but with the naked eye of tender sympathy and psychological interest, have I ever watched our domestic singing-birds, and as opportunity offered, I have peopled a chamber with some twenty birds, partly for the sake of observing the innate, essential characteristics of every one of these unsophisticated children of nature, and partly also to discover the influence of civilisation upon them through their living together, and their intercourse with human kind.

If my bird-state has originated very much like the free state of North America, in an involuntary going in and out, without any written constitution, without a monarchical form of government, it has yet formed, through a harmonious understanding, a law of society perhaps just as natural as that of J. J. Rousseau. If sometimes the power of the stronger prevails—if now and then Lynch-law is practised—if almost daily the old contest between mine and thine is renewed, one may yet often feel one's self carried back into the golden past, or hurried on into the millennium, as, though with me the lion does not lie down with the lamb, the starling eats in peace out of the same dish as the turtle-dove, which is almost as note-worthy. If vices and crimes do sometimes appear, they may be found among men also, notwithstanding their civilisation, and are sometimes the fruits of it. Such a discord but rarely interrupts the harmonious concert of sweet voices, if the sun shines cheerfully into the chamber and upon the fir-tree that stands within it, and makes their prison a kind of fairy grotto, with branchy lattice-windows, and a roof of green, sun-illumined foliage. Let me not be supposed to mean the horrible condemnation of the most innocent hero in the world, whose only fault is his beauty and his voice, to a cage in which he can scarcely move, or at most can only hop from one side of his perch to the other; a condemnation to powder and lead is mercy compared with this lifelong imprisonment in iron. What I mean is bird-houses or chambers, where they can fly about at pleasure.

To give a description of my bird-family, I must attempt it in the form of biographical sketches.

In the first place stands the starling, whom only recently a young raven has sought to rival in human-like behaviour and varied accomplishments. Perhaps I ought to say, rather, that he is most of all influenced by civilisation, addicted to its enjoyments, and infected by its corruptions. The starling, of all the birds of the wood, attaches himself most to men, and among the assembly of his brethren, is the ever-true merry-maker, the buffoon and court-fool of my establishment. As serviceable as he is in the open field in destroying worms and caterpillars, he is just as useful indoors, in clearing men's heads of whims and idle caprices. It is impossible to be ill-humoured or morose when the rogue has taken it into his head to be merry, and he is in his Sunday humour every day. I have often envied him the ease with which he forgets every annoyance, and the Mark Tapley of the feathered race, resumes his good temper and his cheerful song.

He is a gay brother-student, who, with all his display, does not neglect the sciences; of an inquiring turn of mind, and whose erudition is principally manifested in popular songs. He picks up his best songs in the streets; in these there is nothing artificial, all is nature: the mewing of the cat, the barking of the dog, the clucking of the hen, and the rumbling of a cart-wheel, he imitates with incomparable exactness. Sometimes he undertakes the office of a wind-mill; at others, he helps his neighbour the joiner to file his saws. Out of doors, he is a builder and house-painter; in short, a universal genius. In philosophy, he is an eclectic; he selects all that is good from all sources; there is consequently no book and no sound too insignificant for him, from which he will not extract something. He is also fond of a nice tit-bit; he prefers white bread to black, roast veal to beef; and though an avowed disciple of Priesnitz, in respect of baths, yet, on festive occasions, he dips his head in beer or wine, dances his polka, and rolls his eyes about like a lover. He is very inquisitive, he must thrust his beak in everywhere; but how carefully he touches a strange object. Like a crafty rascal as he is, he first satisfies himself that it is no trap for him; then he falls upon it, and brings it entire to the ground; then he examines it within and without, above and below, in which operation his beak does him excellent service, like an exciseman's gauge.

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* From the German.

And he can be angry, too—fearfully angry; with his hair on end, and his eyes flashing, he can avenge himself for every disrespectful treatment he receives from children or grown-up persons, with the most piercing threats; for he is not a little conceited with his singing abilities. When he is standing outside the gate of his cage, on a small platform, turning his beak to all sides, and begins to pipe, he reminds me of the showman at a fair, who stands outside his booth, blowing his trumpet on all sides, before the representation of a piece, with a 'Now, then, gentlemen, all is ready; walk up. He that is not satisfied, shall have his money returned. Children, half-price.'

When, after his first summer, I took him in his cage out of the bird-chamber into the parlour, it was to him like coming home for the holidays for the first time; and how great was my surprise to hear from him a full orchestra the next morning. The blackbird, thrush, the lark, the titmouse, the chaffinch, he reproduced in an incomparable quodlibet; not in a mere insipid imitation, but in the most delicate and minute variations. However nonchalant, mischievous, and prying he may be, he is always at the same time the best-natured and most agreeable companion; he holds himself, it is true, with a certain sovereign hauteur towards his associates, and assumes a kind of superiority, but he has never, even in the slightest degree, ill treated the feeblest or the smallest. 'Live and let live,' seems to be his motto. He cedes nothing to his equals; but to the attacks of his inferiors, he is very patient and indulgent: the robin, for instance, frequently snatches a meal-worm away from him, but he seems more astonished at the temerity of the youngster, than angry at his loss.

Some time since, I had a starling and a little white turtle-dove, who lived together as man and wife. Every marriage, even the most happy, has at times its family jars; but it is a fact, whether believed or not, that the wife, the gentle, quiet, turtle-dove, was far more quarrelsome and petulant than her spouse, who exercised great magnanimity towards her, and bore her infirmities with exemplary patience. Oft when he has come to sit confidentially at her side, she has greeted him with an unexpected flap with her wing, which has sent him to the ground; and the cases are very rare in which he has replied to such salutations with a poke in the ribs. However, he was not under petticoat government; by no means. One can scarcely conceive anything more comic, than when he, in a particularly good-humour, though not very gallant, using the patient sitting dove as his footstool, stood with one foot upon her back, and trumpeted to all the quarters of heaven the praises of his much-enduring better-half; and when she was shaking her head hither and thither, as if to decline the undeserved praise, he whispered her to be quiet till he should please to dismount from his improvised platform. That he had a heart, the following incident will testify.

One day the dove had flown somewhat excitedly out of her cage, and sat down in a corner of the room. She might have sat there a quarter of an hour, with swollen feathers, when the starling got uneasy, and flew down to her. At first, he sought to rouse her from her melancholy by some gentle pushes, and as this did not succeed, then, like a second Job, not, indeed, with his head in the dust, but bent down under his wing, he stood alongside her a great while, and from time to time, addressed her in the softest and kindest plaints of sympathy. He probably would not have survived *her* death; she has, however, been his widow now a whole year, and has not once grieved over her loss.

The starling I now have is a bachelor; and although with a tongue unsurpassed in address, and in the glittering uniform of his variegated robe, he might have made many respectable matches, he has yet declined doing so: whether it is that he was unwilling to marry out of his family, or that he was terrified at the cares and crosses of matrimony, as he saw them in a pair of thrushes, I know not, but he seems fully resolved to spend his days gaily, and close them in single blessedness.

These thrushes I reared from the nest; and they are a sort of example of how birds of the wood live in the chamber, with their natural life not crushed out of them by their captivity; their married state, if it cannot be held up as a model of what it ought to be, is yet a pretty accurate image of what often is the case in the civilised world He had whistled to her the tenderest strains, had sung of spring and love, till her foolish heart, caught by the sweet charms of his protestations, believed him, and thought that the golden hours of the first love would remain eternally young. But 'all males are egotists.' Even when they first began to furnish, and she was labouring industriously the whole day upon her dowry, he used to sit idly by, watching her, smoking his straw cigar, or paying his court to others, in trying the bewitching power of his song, and had to be forcibly warned off, and kept to his duty by the black-bird, who seems to play the part of a policeman among the birds. After the young pair had furnished their house, and were established in it—a self-made nest on a branch of the fir-tree—the honeymoon passed off tolerably well; he remained pretty much at home, and peace continued, except now and then a small scene occurred in respect to the cooking, which was not altogether to his mind. Once [illegible] friend starling sneaked into the house, and as [illegible] faithful wife gave no heed to his insinuations, [illegible] maliciously overthrew her nest for her. After repeated complaints, he was punished, his wings [illegible] cut, the police kept an eye upon him, and he was [illegible] fined to the floor of the room. Domestic jars, [illegible] ever, soon broke out again; the husband was [illegible] satisfied with the household arrangements; on [illegible] they often differed, and with open bills, and [illegible] outstretched, they used to hurl words of defiance [illegible] each other; and very often from words they [illegible] blows, in which the wife, as the weaker combatant, was often worsted, and lost many feathers. [illegible] generally the peace-officer, the black-bird, [illegible] the rescue, and without uttering a word, as [illegible] an arrow, rushed between the combatants, [illegible] the heartless wife-beater to flight.

Greater unity was hoped for when [illegible] prospect of the marriage being blessed with children. Four sky-blue eggs, with black spots, and of remarkable beauty, the wife had laid, and she almost grudged the time she spent in getting her food, so eagerly did she sit upon them. But a luckless fate seemed to hover over the house. Scarcely had the faithful mother had a few days of parental bliss, and provided her brood with the best of nourishment, when she was plunged into deep sorrow. Every one of the young birds vanished, one after the other, no one knew how; and the sorrowing look with which the poor mother, standing one day upon the wreck of her blessedness, the empty nest, appealed to me as if to ask assistance in avenging her on the miserable child-murderer, is not to be described. But who had done it? After I had looked a long while in vain all round the chamber for some hole or crevice through which a depredator might have broken through to attack the defenceless, I was obliged to look for the Herod within the precincts of the room. It could only be one of the larger birds, for whom the mother was no match in a fight for her young ones. It could not be the timid quail; just as little could it be the black-bird, the guardian of peace and order: there remained only the starling, and suspicion fell all the more strongly upon him, as he had already made one disturbing inroad upon the peaceful household. He must, therefore, in the growth of his wings, have escaped from his confinement. Somewhat summarily was he, then, in spite of his protestations of innocence, condemned to prison. Well secured by lock and key, he was obliged to look on, while new parent-joys sprang up for the thrushes, which he could not again disturb.

After three weeks, five young necks were stretched out towards the nourishing mother; but the tender cares of a mother's love were once more cut short in the morning of life. On the second day there were only three, and at mid-day only one young one in the nest. Now, I hid myself, and kept watch through a hole in the door, determined not to withdraw till I had found some clue to this strange disappearance of the little ones. And, lo! I had not long to wait, before I saw —what? It was the very father of these birds, who, with unnatural thirst for blood, raged against his own offspring. The father drove the mother, after a hard conflict, from the nest, and before I could come to the rescue, he had strangled and torn the only remaining young one to pieces. It was fortunate that capital punishment had not been introduced into the bird-state, otherwise a judicial murder had been perpetrated upon the poor starling, while now some compensation could be made to the falsely imprisoned one; for before the real culprit could be apprehended, he was at once set free, and, like the Prodigal Son, had a feast prepared for him, consisting of a dozen meal-worms. The child-murderer was, of course, confined in his place in the cell, which only opened when the placable wife, after a few days' mourning for her slain children, again ravished and befooled by his specious promises of repentance and amendment, applied for his release, and sought herself to open the doors of his prison. How he kept his promises, the future will shew.

Among the other birds, also, love played a great part. Two bull-finches sustained the tragedy of the *Bride of Messina* in an imitation but too faithful. One of the duellists was left dead upon the ground; the other, blinded by the wounds he had received, sickened to death; and this after they had been the best of friends, and each had always hastened to help the other in any fray he might be embroiled in with the robin.

The robin, a neat, little, lively creature, was the sauciest rogue in the whole company, and without respect for any, even the greatest, but had managed to lift himself into a position of undeserved importance. Upon the leaf of the table, where he used to take his food from my hand, durst no other bird shew himself, not even the starling or the black-bird; quick as an arrow, he was at the intruder with his pointed beak; upright as a dart, he drew himself up before him, with a 'Will you go away or not?' Only the wren could rival him in the ease and gracefulness of his flight. He always insisted on his right of primogeniture over his younger brother; though the latter, gentle towards all others, maintained a continual opposition to him. At first, he was always a loser in the fight; but by degrees he became stronger, his powers increased by exercise, and he acquired some amount of toleration from the elder. Like a couple of fighting-cocks, I have often seen them staring at one another with malicious menace; suddenly, with a twitter that sounded like a summons to attack, they fell upon one another, rolled round each other like two butterflies in irritating sport, until one fell to the ground, whereupon the other, with a movement of his neck downwards, and tossing his head aloft as quick as lightning, with his tail spread out in the form of a fan, stood still in his triumph, a real man, as though he would say: 'Come on now, if you have not had enough.' The elder robin is beginning to get old; his head is bald, he hops upon one foot, and he has his favourite spots where he rests or sings. The leaf of the table is his reception-room; whenever I go into the room, he awaits me there, and looks at me with his large cunning eyes, as much as to say: 'You know my favourite dish.' If I hold a meal-worm dangling in the air, without letting a flap of his wing be heard, and without touching my hand, he snaps it off; and with incomprehensible quickness of sight and movement, he anticipates every other bird, when such a worm is thrown to him, snatches the dainty bit from before his mouth, yea, even out of his beak, carries his booty about in triumph for a while, with inimitable grace, as though to shew how sweet stolen fruits are, and then eats it up.

PERILS OF THE BUSH.

There are few more interesting scenes, to the lover of the wild and picturesque, than an 'outspan' in the African wilderness. The outspan is the colonial term for the bivouac. It is here that the party of travellers, or hunters, assemble of an evening, partake of their rough fare, and pass the quiet hours of the night.

An outspan is a motley group, for it is usual to find in one company English sportsmen, Dutch farmers, Caffre and Hottentot servants, and half-breeds between these. Of all sizes, colours, and languages are the men of the party. The horses and oxen are either fastened to the wagons, or are allowed to graze near their owners. Dogs of all varieties, whose genealogy would puzzle a canine herald, watch anxiously the culinary proceedings, whilst the white tilted wagons, and two or three tents, make up the exterior of the group.

Even in the far desert of Africa, the difference between man and man is not lost sight of. There is the small shrivelled-up Hottentot serving with all due humility the fat, prosperous, but illiterate Dutch boer. Yonder is the Caffre or Fingoe receiving his directions from a Hottentot. It would be difficult to say how a scale of rank has been thus established, but each individual appears to yield a ready obedience to his almost self-imposed bonds.

We will visit an African outspan, at which a party of hunters are assembled, and hear some of the tales which these men, whose lives have been passed amidst the wildest scenes, may relate. The evening has closed upon the party, who, having feasted upon their well-earned venison, have assembled in one of their tents, from which the solacing pipe is sending forth its fragrance upon the desert. Only the élite of the party are here assembled; for it would be little short of sacrilege were a 'Totty' or Caffre to presume to enter these sacred precincts, or to join in the conversation of the master. Books are not much read by these Dutch boers, but each individual carries in his head anecdotes sufficient to form an interesting volume of personal adventures. Instead, therefore, of passing their evening in scanning the pages of a book, the hunters or travellers relate those incidents of their lives which may be unknown to the majority of their hearers. A Dutch boer past the middle age shall first tell his tale, to which we will now act the part of relater, as we have more than once acted that of listener.

When I first went into the country near the Bay of Natal, things were very different to what they are now; there were not nearly so many Caffres in the country, and there were no white men except our own party of 'Mensch.'

Game was in plenty; bucks and elands were on the hills where Pietermaritzburg now stands; elephants browsed at Eusdorrs; hippopotami swarmed along the banks of the Umganie, and in the Sea-Cow Lake; and many a monster which has now sought more secure retreats, was then to be seen in the neighbourhood of the bay.

I built myself a beehive-shaped hut, like one of the Caffres, on the open ground near the Umbilo, and cultivated a little piece of ground near it; but having a span of five oxen and a wagon, I did not care to remain quiet in one spot. To trek, and to shoot and trek again, was what I always liked. Those men who like being shut up in your houses or towns, scarcely know what it is to live. Give me a fine open plain, a good horse under me, fifty miles of turf all round, and then I feel free.

Well, I had lived about three weeks near the Umbilo, when my Hottentot Plâchè came one day to me in a great fright, and told me that he had seen 'the biggest snake that ever was;' that it had crossed the Umbilo river, and had entered some long reeds about half a mile from my hut. He said that the snake's head was on the land on one side, whilst the tail was on the other side of the Umbilo. Now, this river is not very broad; but if what the man told me were true, the snake must have been over thirty feet in length. I knew that a species of boa-constrictor was to be found about here, for I had shot one sixteen feet long as I was coming from the old colony to the bay.

I did not trouble myself to look after the snake, for there was a large swamp with long reeds extending for more than a mile along the banks of this river, with cover enough to conceal five hundred snakes.

About a month after Plâchè's interview with the boa, there fell a vast quantity of rain, and the river rose and flooded the whole of this swamp. The nearest piece of dry land to the river was the little rising-ground which I had turned over and sowed with mealeas, and on which my hut stood.

One evening, during the time that the flood was out, I came back from shooting just as the sun was setting. I had shot a riet buck which I had found out in the open ground, behind the Berea Bush. Plâchè was with me, and I left him and a Caffre to bring in the buck, whilst I returned home, alone, to prepare a fire, and get ready the cooking-pots.

I noticed that the water was very high, and had not left more than a hundred yards clear round my hut, which was, however, still some ten or twelve feet above the level of the flood. I placed my gun outside, against the hut, and crawled into the doorway of the kraal. You must know that the only light that enters these buildings is by the doorway, so when I blocked up this, the only aperture, the interior was rather dark. I knew that my flint and steel-box were stuck up in the thatch of the roof, and these I could use to obtain a light, in case the embers were not smouldering in the centre of the hut, where I usually maintained a fire.

I could not see a sign of a spark amongst the ashes, when I first entered the hut; and as the evening was closing in, I thought I might have difficulty in making a fire, as the dew was so heavy that all the wood became damp, even inside the hut; so I lay down, and blew amongst the white-wood ashes, to try and rouse a flame.

Whilst I was thus occupied, I fancied that I heard something move amongst the blankets that lay by the side of the hut. I looked at the spot, and there, to my astonishment, saw a gigantic snake, which appeared nearly as large round as my body. The animal was coiled up amongst my bedding, but had about three feet, head and neck, stretched out and pointed at me—its forked tongue now and again shooting out some inch or two from its mouth.

The instant that I saw the monster, I jumped on to my feet, and looked round for a weapon, but there was not one at hand. My gun I had placed outside; my large knife I had left with Plâchè, to enable him to cut up the buck, and, in fact, I was unarmed. A cold shudder came over me when I realised the state of affairs; the door of the hut was only two feet high, and to escape, therefore, I must crawl out, and I felt certain that if I stooped down, the snake would instantly dart at me.

I was not at all aware what power these snakes might possess; I had heard that they could kill nearly full-grown calves, and could crush and swallow a buck; and therefore, I believed a monster like this would make short work of me. I might fight and struggle, but, unarmed, what could I do?

How long I stood looking at the snake, I do not know, but it could not have been many seconds, although the time appeared minutes; suddenly I remembered that my Caffre had, a few days before, asked me to allow him to place an assagai in my hut, because the night-dew caused the blade to rust when the weapon was exposed. Here, then, was a hope for me, for I knew that the man had not taken away the assagai with him.

I scarcely dared take my eyes off the snake, lest the brute should dart at me; but giving a glance round the upper part of the hut, I saw the handle of the assagai protruding from the thatch, and nearly within reach of me. Something seemed to tell me that the instant I moved, the snake would spring at me. I, however, raised my hand and arm very slowly towards the assagai, and at length, by bending over a little, managed to grasp the handle. As I did so, the snake, which had gradually uncoiled during my movements, darted towards me. I jumped aside, and pulled out the broad-bladed assagai, which had been sharpened to the keenness of a razor; but the snake moved like lightning, and although he had missed me in his first dart, he recovered himself instantly, and sprung [illegible] me again. Before I could make a cut at him, [illegible] teeth caught in my leather trousers, and he [illegible] obtained a strong hold, and with a pull as sudden [illegible] his lunge, he dragged my feet from under me, and brought me to the ground; a big fold of his body rolled over his head, and fell upon my legs, which weighed to the ground as if a loaded wagon [illegible] on them.

He managed all this in a very short time; but I [illegible] not idle, for I knew that if he could once manage [illegible] press down my chest, or my arms, he might kill [illegible]

Now, the feeling that first came upon me was certainly not a pleasant one, because I was without a weapon; but as soon as I grasped the assagai I knew that I was safe; consequently, when he really attacked me, I felt as though it were a piece of impudence on his part, for I never expected the affair would have been as dangerous to me as it proved to be. These things take some time to tell, but they do not take long to happen, and a struggle for life or death is frequently decided in half a minute. So it was with me. The instant the snake's body came over on my legs, I twisted round, and sliced it with the assagai. I gave two terrible gashes, and the monster, releasing its hold of my leathers, sprung at my face. I raised my arm instinctively to protect myself, which saved me from being bitten; but I was knocked down flat, and the brute was again on me; but this time I caught him by the neck with my left hand, and in an instant had nearly severed his head with the assagai. I scrambled away from the monster, which was writhing about in its agony, and escaped from the hut. Then I began to examine how I had fared in the fight. To my surprise, I found that a few deep scratches near the ankle, and a bite near the wrist, neither of which was of very great importance, were all the wounds which I had sustained. For some days afterwards, however, I suffered a great deal of pain in the legs, where the snake had pressed me.

I do not think that I should have escaped to tell this tale, if I had not found the assagai, as the boa, although unwilling to attack you when he is in the open country, is pugnacious enough when shut up with you in a circular hut about eight feet in diameter.

We soon hauled the snake from the hut, when my Hottentot arrived, and found it to measure twenty-eight feet in length, and nearly a foot in diameter in the thickest part. The Hottentot thought it must be that which he had seen, as its markings appeared the same. It was evident that the floods had driven the snake from its usual concealment in the reeds, and the animal finding a warm hut, in which were blankets and the remains of a fire, had taken up its position without ceremony, and had been probably much irritated at my sudden intrusion upon him. I never wish to have such another battle, for although I should not be afraid of the result, still the thoughts which come upon us afterwards are not pleasant. Man has an instinctive horror of serpents, and when I dreamed, for many a night afterwards, it was usually about a snake, or some other horrid reptile, which had hold of me.

'Ah!' says another of the party, 'these sort of fights are not pleasant; but your case would have been worse, if your visitor had been a four-foot cobra or puff-adder, instead of an eight-and-twenty foot boa-constrictor. It is not the biggest creatures that are always the most dangerous. It's the vice of some of them that does the mischief. As it is with animals, so it is with men—the biggest are not always the most dangerous. Jan there, who takes his *brandywyn* so quietly, is more dangerous than Karl beside him, although Jan is small, and Karl very big.'

At this sally, 'Jan,' a small, compact, dark-eyed Dutchman, with a long black beard, and sharp twinkling eyes, attracts the attention of the party. Jan is a celebrated hunter, before whom Caffres and Bushmen, elephants, lions, and other *feræ* have bowed and yielded their lives. Many a wondrous tale can Jan tell, and yet avoid drawing upon his imagination. Thirty years of a desert-life have not been passed without a variety of incidents and of hairbreadth escapes which appear marvellous to the denizens of civilised countries, but which are by no means unusual amidst the wilds of South Africa, where the savage nature of man is too frequently left without control and where the strong arm and the ready spear often raise a man from the lowest to the highest grades amongst his fellows.

The Dutch boers have been the pioneers of civilisation in that country, and have often had to combat against the ferocious biped and quadruped, before they could even rest upon the land which they had purchased. It must be owned that these men were not unfitted for their work; hardy and bold, they stood not for trifles; were the disputants lions or savages, it mattered not much—the first were slain as wild beasts, which must be got rid of; the second would be shot in self-defence, or as a warning to others; or all for the glory of God. In the earlier days, the savages paid no great respect to treaties, and liked the music which an assagai made when insinuated between a white man's ribs.

Jan shall now tell one of his adventures.

'When we are young, we have many treats before us, for there are plenty of amusements of all sorts to which to look forward. When we get older, we tire of these, and want change. Too much of the same thing does not do. Now, I always think that the first time that we do anything is that which is always the most strongly impressed upon our memory, whether it be getting on a horse, driving a team of oxen, firing off a gun, killing a buck, fighting an elephant, or any other performance.

'Now, as many of you who know me are aware, I have done some one or two acts that men may be proud of. In my house there are the tails of two hundred bull elephants, all shot by my own gun, discharged from my own shoulder; ten lion-skins, each with but one bullet-hole in it; and if I had taken all the skins and all the tails that I had assisted to deprive the owners of, I might have possessed ten times ten. But never mind that, I will tell you now of the first time that I was ever in battle.'

'You have not yet told us half that you have done,' remarks one of the party; 'tell us what all these little crosses on your gun-stock mean.'

'These,' says the first speaker, 'are for Caffres—some Amakosæ, some Zooloo, some Matabili.'

'What are the larger crosses?' asks the inquirer.

'There are three of them; these, and I am not ashamed to own it, are for Englishmen.'

'What!' asks one of the English visitors, 'are those marks to indicate the men you have killed? Why, there are three or four dozen small crosses, and three large.'

'Ja, there are fifty-two small crosses and three large, that is, with this roer. I've another with a few more on it, but they are only Bushmen and frontier Caffres—skulkers, they are. But all here are warriors, fighting-men, killed with their faces towards me, and many of them shot when so near to me, that it was either my life or theirs. Oh, we have led a hard life in the plains, and have had to maintain our grounds by the strength of our arms, and the accuracy of our aim. What your father left you, wasn't yours, without you were able to pull your trigger against those who tried to snatch your property from you; but quieter times are now coming, I hope.

'But now, to give you an account of my first battle, which I was led to fight as follows:

'I was living with my father over on the west side of the mountains, when we received the intelligence of the massacre of Retief and his party by the Zooloos, and also of the slaughter of the wives and children who were found unprotected around the Bay of Natal.

'Messengers were sent to all the Mensch about us to ask that we would assemble and revenge the murder of our friends and connections. Nearly every man amongst us, whether old or young, responded to the call, and we assembled to the number of about three hundred and eighty, under Piet Uys.

'Dividing our force into two parties, we advanced against the enemy, and opened fire upon them. When we had penetrated some distance up the defile on each side of which the Zooloos, some eight thousand strong, had stationed themselves, we heard a noise, which came from behind us, and we then saw that a body of nearly a thousand picked men, who had been lying in ambush, had now cut off our retreat, and were closing in upon us. There was something awful in the sight of these savages, stained as they were with the blood of hundreds of our connections or friends. The training which the men had received now told to advantage, for they came on at a steady run, shoulder to shoulder, and three deep, brandishing their assagais, beating their large black and white ox-hide shields, and singing their war-songs. One of our divisions, under Potgeiter, was at once thrown into confusion, for the horses became frightened and unmanageable, in consequence of the noise and the appearance of the Zooloos. The other division under Uys thus had to sustain the shock of the charge, whilst at the same time the enemy who had been on the hills closed in on both sides. A heavy fire was kept up by all of us, and the Zooloos fell fast all around us. As we mowed down one line of them, more charged up in their place; and if by chance any of our party became separated from the main body, these stragglers were at once surrounded, some of the Zooloos actually clinging to the legs of the horses, and holding on even in their death-struggles, whilst others dragged the rider to the ground, and stabbed him with their broad-bladed spears. It was a fearful sight, and on me, who had never before seen a man shot dead, the effect was still more powerful than on those who had witnessed such scenes many times, for amongst our band were boers who had fought several times with Moselekatse's warriors; but none, they afterwards told me, ever equalled these Zooloos in determination and fierceness. We shot them down by hundreds, but more came up immediately in their places. Our chief, Uys, was surrounded and killed, and several others of our party; and now our only endeavour was to force our way through the enemy's ranks, and effect our escape: we therefore advanced quickly upon the rear division, fired a volley, and then charged at the opening which our bullets had made for us. It was not without the loss of several lives that we escaped from our dangerous position, for the warriors did not give way, and our road was made over the bodies of the slain or wounded. Many of the latter caught hold of the horses' legs as the animals passed near them, and thus prevented the riders from escaping. When the country became more open, our party was able to manœuvre better, and then, although the horses were nearly knocked up, the Zooloos were allowed to come within a convenient distance, when the boers fired a volley, and galloped away to load. This proceeding soon stopped the pursuit of the black warriors, who returned to their stronghold, after having received two or three volleys, and having suffered severely thereby.

'This was the general outline of the battle; but now I will tell you my part in the performance. When we charged through the ranks of the Zooloos, I happened to be on the outside of the line, what the Rodiebashes call "a flanker," consequently, I was more exposed than those who were nearer the middle of our line. We dashed along at full gallop, and pretended that we were going to fire every moment, but our guns were not reloaded; this, however, the Caffres did not know. As we passed amongst the thickest of the enemy, half-a-dozen men rushed at me, but only two were able to reach me. One of them threw his spear, and wounded me in the thigh; the other slashed my horse, and nearly hamstrung him. Before we had journeyed half a mile, I found that I should soon have to stop, for my horse bled freely, and could scarcely canter. It was an awful thought to think that I might fall into the hands of these bloodthirsty savages; but there appeared to be no other result likely to happen, for in a few minutes my horse sunk under me, and I then saw that he had received two or three stabs in the belly, probably from the spears of those wounded men over whom we had ridden. I called to some of the Mensch who were near, and asked them to stay with me, but a panic appeared to have seized upon them, and they either did not hear, or did not heed. Knowing the danger of remaining in the open part, I ran along beside some bushes, until I found a thick forest of thorns; into this I dashed, and having found a quiet, dark corner, I stopped to consider what I should do. The prospect before me was not cheering, for I was fully sixty miles from the bay, and I had no doubt that my party would not halt until they reached this spot, and also that the country between would be overrun by the Zooloos. First, I thought of lying concealed until night, and then attempting part of the journey; but the improbability of finding my way through the bush, and the certainty of being discovered and captured by the Caffres if I followed the beaten footpaths by which we had entered the country, soon caused me to relinquish this idea.

'I was in a very excited state when I thought over my difficulties, and could not resist the wish to peep out on the open country; so I crept to the edge of the bush, and looked all round. At first, all appeared quiet, and no person could be seen; but shortly after, I saw, at about a quarter of a mile from me, three Zooloos, one of whom was leading a horse. They were walking slowly, and appeared to be describing one to the other their respective performances. A thought at once entered my head, and set me planning. In the country between me and the Caffres were several clumps of bush, and I at once determined to risk an attack upon these men, and to endeavour to capture the horse.

'The plan was a dangerous one, but my case was desperate. Even if I did gain a victory, and possess myself of the horse, there was still no very great chance of escape, for I must pass alone over many miles of country in which strong parties of the victorious Zooloos were sure to be on the lookout for stragglers; still there is such a feeling of strength comes over us when we are mounted on a good horse, and I saw at once that this was the *schimmel* of one of our men who had been killed early in the day.

'There is something in my constitution—I do not like to call it courage—that makes me, when I am in positions of great danger, become very calm and calculating. Some other men I have found affected in a similar manner, whilst others become nervous or imprudent.

'When the thought struck me to attack these men, I made all my plans in an instant. I saw that they were approaching some rather tall trees, which appeared near a river, and between me and this river the cover was tolerably good. I waited until the party were hidden from view, and then ran towards them.

'I looked about me, and fully expected to see a party of Zooloos chasing me, but no man was near. I could hear the shrieks of women in the distance, probably over the bodies of the slain on the battle-field, but fortunately for me, every one appeared too busy elsewhere to be examining this part of the field. Twice I dropped on to the ground, as the Caffres crossed a little open patch of grass, and once I crouched behind some bushes, and feared that all was lost, for the horse recognised my dress, pricked up his ears, and turned his head to look at me. I was scarcely two hundred yards distant then; and had the Caffres known the nature of a horse, or had they not been so much occupied in talking, my surprise, which I knew would be half the battle, would have failed. Again they passed between thick bushes, and again I ran on. I passed them at about a hundred yards' distance, but well concealed, and pushed on in advance, and lay down near the stream, at about thirty paces from the path.

'I was very hot, and my hands were shaking with excitement, for the struggle would now take place in a few seconds. I cocked my roer—fortunately, it had two barrels—and waited. On they came; I could hear their voices, then their footsteps, and at length they stood within forty paces of me. I allowed them to advance a few paces, then took aim at the man who led the horse, fired, and saw him instantly fall to the ground. I then covered the second Caffre, and dropped him.

'Now, if the third man had known that I possessed no weapon other than an empty gun, which I did not like to stay to load, he would probably have closed with me, and stabbed me with his assagai. I knew that if I shewed a sign of fear, he might suspect that my gun had power to throw two shots only, but I knew that these Caffres possessed such a slight knowledge of firearms, that they were not certain how many times we could fire without loading; so, instantly after firing, I jumped from my concealment, and pointed my gun at the remaining Caffre. He did not stop for inquiry, but jumped about from side to side like a Duiker, and rushed down the path up which he had just come.

'Having got rid of these men, I knew that only a small part of my work was done, for I was not certain that the horse would allow me to catch him; and if he were to gallop off, or shew himself shy, I should be in a more awkward position than before, because now the Zooloos knew that there was a dismounted white man near them, whom they could easily surround and kill. I knew that the only plan to adopt to catch the horse was to approach him very slowly, so as not to cause any alarm, and this was the most trying work for my patience that I ever had to do. Each minute was now of importance. The report of my gun must have alarmed the men at the village; the Caffre who had escaped would inform them of my solitary position, even a delay of a few seconds might cause me to be unmercifully tortured, and then slaughtered, and yet I knew that hurry might spoil all.

'When the Caffre who was leading the horse fell to the ground, the animal trotted off to about fifty yards' distance, and commenced grazing. When I approached him, he lifted his head, and moved slowly away from me. I stopped instantly, and walked round so as to appear by no means anxious to catch him. After two or three times walking round him, each time getting nearer, I at length ventured on approaching him.

'Now, I had often noticed that if you went up to a horse very slowly, and continued saying: "Ah, now, good horse," and all that, the animal usually appeared to suspect you meant some mischief, and would move off; so, trusting that the schimmel was a good shooting horse, I loaded my gun nearly close to him, and then walked straight towards him, as though we were old friends, taking care to advance from the left side. To my joy and delight, he raised his head from feeding, but stood perfectly quiet. I seized the bridle, jumped on his back, and, with a hearty "trek," galloped off.

'Whilst I was loading my gun, I could hear the conversation of some Zooloos in the distance: these men were shouting to one another from the hill-tops, and I knew that this would entail hard riding and a watchful eye, to enable me to escape from the parties which were already out endeavouring to secure possession of all the crossings of the rivers; whilst the less fleet of foot would watch me from the hill-tops; but now, on the back of a horse, I felt safe. The schimmel galloped strong, and felt like iron under me, and I had soon passed over three or four miles; but now I had a bad piece of bush to pass through, and I suspected that the enemy were there in wait for me.

'When within about a quarter of a mile of the bush, which I saw was only about a hundred yards in extent, I pulled up, as though to look about me, but, in reality, to note if any path other than that by which I was approaching led through the bushes. I saw another some distance to the left; so I rode down towards this, as though I purposed passing through over this path. My plan succeeded, for I instantly saw several black heads moving along very quickly, from near the path where I appeared to be going, to that by which my passage was now expected.

'I rode on very slowly, and as though I had seen nothing; but when I approached within about fifty yards of the dense bush, I turned my horse, and rode full gallop towards the other pathway, and dashed through the bushes, fortunately without interruption. A savage yell, from at least fifty disappointed Zooloos, greeted me, when I appeared on the other side; for I had drawn their ambuscade from the one pathway to the other, and thus escaped. I rode hard for the next two hours, but did not see another friend or foe, until I came up with the party of Mensch, who were hastening down to the bay to save what they could, either by treking or going on board a ship; for we knew that the Zooloos would be down upon us in a couple of days at farthest.

'I have been in many a sharp and hard fight since that day, and some not the most pleasant to look back upon; but, as I told you at the commencement, the first battle, like the first of everything, is that which we remember the best, and so I can recall every circumstance attending my first fight, and am thus able to tell all that happened, without forgetting one incident, or even the feelings which I then experienced.'

NAIADS OF THE SEINE.

I NEVER could understand how it happens that among French ladies, who have, as a rule, a dread and horror of those ablutions, partial or entire, to which every English woman is accustomed, should be found expert and habitual swimmers; but so it is.

French people do not know the value of either plain wholesome food, out-of-door exercise, a free circulation of air, or the free use of cold water, as preservatives of health. Paris, moreover, is ill supplied with the last-mentioned element: a few conduits are seen here and there, but there is no general provision for furnishing water to houses, much less to apartments; hence it is a luxury, being purchased from the water-carriers, who perambulate the streets with casks full of 'Eau de Seine,' which they retail at two sous (or one penny) a pail; not too much, when we consider that they are often called upon to mount five or six flights of stairs with a heavy pail depending from either end of the yoke on their shoulders, to fill the kitchen fountain, the only receptacle for water provided in the majority of Parisian houses.

I know many ladies who would on no account 'wash their faces,' as we understand the term. The end of a towel dipped in water, stretched over the tips of the fingers, and thus passed over the face, suffices for some; others think that a bit of cotton dipped in a quarter of a tea-saucerful of equal parts of spirits of wine and water, or of brandy and water, is a very good contrivance for cleansing and improving the skin; others, again, consider a morsel of flannel indued with 'cold cream,' and smeared over the face, as a sure method of arriving at the desired result. Warm water is patronised by a few.[*] But when we English tell the women of Paris that the freshness and bloom of our English complexion is preserved by the healthful and copious application of cold water, they laugh outright, saying they see we will not tell our little secret.

In striking contrast to the ladies who follow these and similar devices, are those who disport in the river like amphibious creatures.

Ouarnier's *Ecole de Natation pour Dames* (Swimming-school for Ladies) opens in the month of May, and it is difficult to imagine a more novel or prettier scene than it presents on a warm afternoon, for even the swimmers eschew the water at an early hour of the day; it must have been well warmed by the sun to please them.

Neither at concert, race, nor ball in Paris have I beheld so many beautiful faces as at this school; one reason perhaps being, that many girls, from ten to fifteen, are visitors to the bath, who are excluded, by their age, from sharing in public amusements.

The young ladies of the 'Noble Faubourg,'[†] the daughters of the wealthy 'financiers,' the families attached to the emperor, all meet here with the same intention—namely, to swim; and all who are able, gambol, race, and laugh in the water, forgetful of party and social distinctions. The costume is generally of some dark material, gaily trimmed with red or blue worsted binding, which does not lose its colour. The upper part of the dress resembles a boy's blouse; the lower, a pair of trousers. It is all in one, and a tunic is sewn to the waist, and falls to the knee. Some of the girls go in without any kind of head-dress beyond their own fine hair, neatly plaited; others wear nets of gay colours, or a slight-netted scarlet or blue scarf gracefully arranged. The greater part of the swimmers are, as we have intimated, young; but ladies of all ages and *sizes* swim in the bath, which it is time we described.

It presents to the eye a basin about 150 or 160 feet long, and about 25 or 30 feet broad, surrounded by a broad platform, enclosed by the dressing-rooms, and screened alike from the sun and from public observation by an awning stretched over all. The bottom of the boat is an inclined plane, not more than 2 feet below the surface of the water at one end, but 12 or 13 feet below its level at the other. The bed of the river is artificially deepened, so as to allow the bath to rise and fall according to the quantity of water. The machine is so arranged that the powerful current of the Seine rushes through it; it is, in fact, a large cage sunk to the required depth.

That part of the basin which is from four to five feet deep is crossed by a bridge; and the smaller portion thus indicated is used by those who wish to bathe only, or who are not sufficiently good swimmers to exercise, as yet, in the larger one. A flight of steps leads down to the shallow end of the basin, for the convenience of those who like to walk in; other flights go down on each side of the bridge, for the use of those who know just enough of swimming to give the few strokes necessary to take them a little way down the smaller basin, or across it.

But the large basin is the centre of attraction. At the end where the water is deepest, flights of steps lead down for those who like to swim smoothly and quietly off; but far the greater number prefer leaping in, either from the platform, or from the little fanciful construction, half arch, half temple, raised at the end of it, and which gives a descent any height you please—between ten and twenty feet—to the surface of the water.

Fearless, gay, and graceful, they plunge beneath the flood to reappear almost instantly, gliding down the stream without any apparent effort; floating, swimming on the back, &c., vary the amusements, which more than a hundred ladies may sometimes be seen sharing together, their evolutions being watched and stimulated by as many lookers-on—their mothers and female friends, who are seated around. But, alas! swimming is like every other acquirement—before the art is mastered, some disagreeable training must be gone through; many a gasp must be given, many a splashing and floundering enacted by the neophyte, in the small basin, before she is qualified to attempt a performance in the large one.

Little did I think, when I inscribed myself on M. Ouarnier's list, that I should be hung on a hook at the end of a line, and then thrown into the water with directions to imitate a frog to the best of my ability; but it was even so.

I had never seen swimmers except at a respectful distance, and fancied their heads were kept above water by some fin-like movement of the limbs, which movement the swimming-master would jump into the water and teach me in a minute, just keeping me by his side, and supporting me a little at first.

The plan followed I found to be this: the stranger being duly invested with the *costume de bain* (swimming-dress), is informed that there are three movements, afterwards condensed into two, that when the arms are stretched forward and outward, the legs must be closed and drawn up, and *vice versâ*. The movements of the *maître nageur* (swimming-master) cannot fully realise this on dry land; so he puts a broad girdle round your waist, and by means of a hook and line, drops you gently on to the surface of the water, in order that you may carry the theory into practice.

O dear, how helpless you feel!—how you wish you had never thought of learning to swim! But you are ashamed to say so; you know you cannot be drowned; the man adjusts his line so nicely to the level of the water, you feel quite sure of *that;* so he counts 'One, two, three,' and you perform Froggy awkwardly enough, putting out your hands when you ought to keep them in, stretching your arms forward when they ought to be close to your body, kicking in anything but measured cadence, bobbing under water, and getting a good mouthful, notwithstanding you, silly creature, stiffen your neck, and try to keep your head up by *that* means. Thus ends the first lesson. When you come out of the water, they tell you, if you should feel a little stiff next day, not to mind it, and that the only way to get rid of the inconvenience is to take a lesson the next day, and the next. A little stiff? Your neck and shoulders ache again—nothing for it but to recommence the exercise of yesterday. You feel less tired this time, when you come out of the water, and have comported yourself less clumsily when in it. In fact, after three or four lessons, you are handed down the steps on that side of the bridge where the water is four feet six inches deep; the swimming-master holds a long rope in the water at the distance of three or four feet from you, and requests you to make the movements you have been taught. If they do not enable you to clear the distance between you and the pole, he hastens to advance it to you. You return to the steps, try again; and as soon as you can manage a short distance, the pole is held further from you; till, after two or three lessons more, you swim off from the steps at the end, where the water is deepest, the man on the platform preceding you with a pole as you attempt to make your way down the large basin. When you can go no further, you grasp the pole, and are gently drawn through the water back to the steps, to renew your efforts.

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[*] Infants and children do not fare much better in this respect than their parents. I have often been present at the washing and dressing of a fine baby, say of three or four months old: a small vessel containing a very limited quantity of warm water, and a bit of sponge, is all that is employed in place of the ample bath, common among us. In vain you expatiate on the benefits of the English system, and suggest that the child should be immersed daily; beginning with warm water, and gradually lowering the temperature, so as to reach cold in the course of a week. O no! mamma says she does not wish to bring her child up 'à l'Anglaise.'

Mammas and children profit at rare intervals by the numerous and cheap warm-baths; in these they have no objection to remain for an hour at a time, either at the public establishments or at their own houses, where the expense of the bath itself, the hot water to fill it, and the labour of the men who bring it and take it away, is covered by the small sum of from thirty to thirty-five sous—fifteen to eighteen pence in the rich neighbourhoods, and about half that price in a poor one.

[†] The Faubourg St Germain.

When the pupil can accomplish the whole length of the great basin under the eye of the master, she is left to perfect herself in the smaller one, where there is no danger. And when she feels she can rely on her powers, she returns to the great bath, where her first essays are made easy by the assistance of a ledge for the feet which surrounds the bath at a depth of about three feet below the surface, and which being surmounted by a rail a little above the water's edge, permits the swimmers to take rest at any point. This large basin is constantly watched either by Ouarnier himself or by the swimming-master; these are the only individuals of the male sex ever present. Madame Ouarnier is, as may be expected, a perfect swimmer, and takes an active interest in all the proceedings.

THE PORTRAIT OF A CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN.*

It is quite in vain that critics and readers both constantly repeat that the biography of a man of letters is almost always uneventful and unentertaining, and that we can hardly expect it to be otherwise. Whatever we expect, or have any just cause for expecting, there is, and always will be, an incurable curiosity to know something of *the man*, wherever the *writer* has succeeded in interesting us.

Other great men, the great captain, the great statesman, write their lives in their deeds; the very career which ennobles and distinguishes them, is also their biography. We see them in their actions. Their lives, too, are written in the history of their country; they hardly need a separate memorial. With the man of letters, it is otherwise. He has written a book, and put it there on the desk before us. The hand that placed it is unseen. He has revealed himself to us by his thoughts only; unless some friend will tell us, we can know nothing of his destiny. We have in him an object of esteem, perhaps of some degree of veneration, and yet our hero remains, even to the mind's eye, obstinately invisible. We desire that he should take human form, and be seen like the rest of us, moving amongst the realities of everyday-life. Under what circumstances had he those thoughts which have so interested us? He was not thinker only; he, too, suffered and enjoyed before he passed away. 'How lived, how loved, how died he?' It may be a common-place story, but in this instance we must have the common-place.

Mr Burgon is the very friend we would, if we might, have chosen to tell us about the inner and outer life of such a man as Patrick Fraser Tytler. There is throughout the work a tone of delicate and discriminating appreciation of moral graces as well as virtues; there is also a something of old-world simplicity and loyalty pervading the volume, from its dedication to its close, of chivalry formal, indeed, but lofty and tender, which is in excellent keeping with the character portrayed. Mr Burgon has also been fortunate in receiving most able co-operation. The details given of Mr Tytler's youth, as well as some relating to his London life, are put together by his sister's graceful and practised pen—the pen to which our children owe so many pleasant hours.

Patrick Fraser Tytler had a hereditary claim, it would appear, upon talent and goodness: his grandfather and father were both eminent for these. The former was William Tytler, the well-known defender of Mary Stuart. His *Inquiry into the Evidence against the Queen of Scots* was declared at the time to have formed an era in literary history; was reviewed by Dr Johnson, lauded by Lord Hardwicke, and chafed at by David Hume, who appears to have departed on this occasion from his usual mildness towards literary opponents. But in this case, what the man *was* has more permanent interest than what the writer *did.* In his healthy nature, fervent affections and love of harmless frolic lasted unimpaired till the age of fourscore. At seventy-five, we find him writing of the wife he had lost two years before, as fondly as he might have done fifty years back: 'She is the first idea that strikes my waking thought in the morning, and the last that forsakes it in sleep.' Truly, a glorious old grandfather for any man to have had. Patrick Tytler's father, too, Lord Woodhouselee, was equally distinguished for talents, culture, and domestic *perfection* —the word is not too strong. Nothing can be more attractive than the picture given of the scientific lawyer, the learned Professor of Universal History, the popular author at his own home, and surrounded by his family. 'My dear father,' writes his daughter Ann, 'when did he ever find out a fault in any of his children? We were all perfection with him, yet we were a wild unruly set; we scrambled into a sort of uncertain education, I scarce know how. My dear mother in vain endeavoured to check my father's unlimited indulgence. "I do it on principle," he would say; "I know they are the kind of children with whom it will answer best."' And it did answer marvellously well, as it always will when 'done on principle,' not from indolence or mere impulse; when, consequently, it is steady and constant, to be leaned on confidently, not fitful and uncertain, to be taken advantage of while it lasts. Miss Ann Tytler gives us many a charming peep into social life at Woodhouselee. Walter Scott, most lovable of all the sons of genius, came often there for many days at a time. 'It was a beautiful feature in his character that he required no audience of the learned or the great to draw out the charm of his conversation; he seemed in his element equally with old and young.' What walks they had with him in the mornings! up towards the green hill of Castlelaw, with Carnethy rising behind. There 'he would begin his delightful stories. Sometimes they were legends of the old Covenanters; for at no great distance from where we were seated, had been discovered several Covenanters' graves; and a report was current in our village that on one day a funeral-procession by torch-light had been seen slowly wending their way amongst the hills towards this ancient burial-place—no one knowing whence they came.'

Could anything be better than such mornings as these? Yes; still more delectable the thrill of 'the ghost-stories of the autumn evenings, when we used to entreat my father not to ring for candles after dinner; but drawing round the clear wood-fire, we listened with such excited feelings of terror and of awe, that very soon, for any of us to have moved to ring a bell would have been impossible. How could we dare to doubt the truth of every word, having ourselves our own legitimate ghost to be believed in, celebrated by Walter Scott himself in one of his ballads, "To Auchindinny's hazel shade and haunted Woodhouselee?"' How indeed? There was the 'big bedroom' with tapestry hangings, and 'a mysterious-looking, small, and very old door,' from which, as might be expected, 'the ghost was wont to issue.' An old nurse, who, with a young daughter, Betty, 'took charge of the house during the winter,' had faced the haunting vision—Lady Anne Bothwell—so often, that familiarity had bred contempt. '"'Deed," she would say to her young auditors, "I hae seen her times out o' number, but I am in no ways feared. I ken weel she canna gang beyond her commission. But there 's that silly, feckless thing, Betty; she met her in the lang passage ae night in the winter-time, and she had nae a drap o' bluid in her face for a fortnight after. She says Lady Anne came sae near her, she could see her dress quite weel. It was a Manchester muslin with a wee flower."'

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* *Memoirs of Patrick Fraser Tytler, author of the History of Scotland.* By his friend, the Rev. John W. Burgon, M.A., Fellow of Oriel College. Published by John Murray.

In the early days of his married life, Walter Scott was not only, as we have seen, a frequent visitor, but a near neighbour; his pretty cottage at Lasswade, with 'but one good sitting-room,' yet 'every appearance of taste and cultivation,' being within a walk of Woodhouselee. Thither, too, came Dugald Stewart, 'no deep philosopher to the younger branches of the family;' Henry Mackenzie, not so thoroughly the 'man of feeling' as, indeed, to shrink from the excitement of, or fail to find 'intense enjoyment' in, a cock-fight, but kind-hearted, and always a friend at need; Sir James Mackintosh, who was related to Mrs Tytler; Leyden, the insatiate student and marvellous orientalist; Lord Jeffrey, with his brilliant conversation; and best and brightest of all possible guests, Sydney Smith, with his 'straightforward, generous, benevolent character and sparkling wit.' It is pleasant to read how that, on a stormy evening at Woodhouselee, when rattling windows interrupted the conversation, Sydney Smith, ready-handed as he was ready-minded, asked for knife, screw, and a bit of wood, that he might 'cure it in a moment;' how that the little bit of wood was christened Sydney's button; and how that, after a lapse of fifty years, with their vicissitudes of paper and paint, 'amidst all the changes of masters, time, and taste,' *Sydney's button* has ever been respectfully preserved. It was amid this charmed circle of the good and gifted, that Patrick Fraser's childhood and youth were passed. He was born in Princes Street, Edinburgh, in 1791, and educated first at a lady's reading-school close at hand, and then at the High School, where he was more beloved by his school-fellows than distinguished in his class. Those were exciting days for school-boys. There was a long-standing feud between the High School and the University, which now and then reached a height at which a *bicker* became necessary. The parties were 'drawn out in battle-array, facing each other, each with a mountain of small stones by their side, which they hurled without mercy at the heads of their enemies, till one or other gave in.' Into these strifes, Patrick Tytler, gentle as he was, would throw himself, heart and soul; his sister remembers his 'darting into the room one day with his face all bruised and streaming with blood, exclaiming: "Wash my face; quick, quick—put a cold key down my back, and let me out again to the bicker."' Lord Woodhouselee was too sensible to be uneasy about a boy like this—gentle and brave, that happiest of all combinations—merely because he did not head his class. He declared that Patrick was 'a wonderful boy'—pointed, in confirmation of his paternal estimate, to the expression of countenance with which he listened to conversation far beyond his years, and prophesied that, despite his preference for 'amusing stories' above 'improving books,' he would 'read grave enough books by and by.'

But, indeed, Patrick's 'amusing stories' appear to have been 'improving' too; and it is pleasant to think of the boy stretched on the library carpet with Percy's *Reliques*, the *Faery Queen*, the *Arabian Nights*, Shakspeare, which he knew by heart, and chief favourite of the embryo historian, De Salis's *History of the Moors*, 'a very old-looking book, a thin quarto, in very large print, which he had poked out from some odd corner in the book-case.' We do not wonder that when, in 1808, young Tytler was sent from the freedom of his happy home to a school near London, he 'should have had a hard battle to fight with his home feelings.' However, this was, according to his own account, the turning-point of his life; he became a most assiduous student. 'What should I not do to please such a father?' he writes. Greek he soon feared he should be only too fond of, and every leisure hour was devoted to English reading, especially to history. 'In September 1809,' writes his sister Ann, 'he returned to us again—a joyful day for all; yet soon after his arrival, we missed his youngest sister from the room, and found her weeping. "What! in tears," we said, "and our Patrick returned to us again; and is he not delightful?" "O yes, yes," she answered; "he *is* delightful, but he speaks English."' There were other changes too—a 'touch of seriousness,' signs of an over-anxious temper—of a scrupulousness which he himself called 'worreting;' in short, 'the only fear now was that he should study too hard.' For the next three years he lived at home, attending classes at the college, diligently preparing for them, and enjoying the closest and happiest companionship with his beloved father.

Lord Woodhouselee had been an invalid for some years; but his mind was bright as ever, and his sufferings were borne with so calm, nay, cheerful a resignation, that when, in 1813, the end suddenly came, the loss to his family was inexpressibly and abidingly felt. Not to quote the fervent language of his early sorrow, six years after we find Tytler writing of his own bereavement thus: 'My heart must cease to beat, my memory become a blank, my affections wither, and my whole being change, before the love and goodness of my father, and the uninterrupted happiness of our life when he dwelt surrounded by his family in this earthly paradise, shall fade from my recollection.' But to return to 1813. Patrick Tytler's studies had for some time past taken a legal direction, and in this year he was admitted into the Faculty of Advocates. The following spring, accompanied by three intimate friends, he went off to Paris, and beheld that constellation of remarkable men that shone out there for a brief season during Napoleon's exile to Elba. His life was bright and exciting. 'Only think of seeing the Apollo Belvedere one morning, and the Emperor Alexander the next;' but in the midst of it all, he could find time for long letters to those at home, and his commonplace-book shews that none of the temptations and distractions with which he was surrounded, ever lowered his lofty standard of theory or practice. After only three years' standing at the bar, Mr Tytler was made junior crown-counsel—an honourable appointment, which he delighted to ascribe solely to the respect paid to his father's memory. The next ten years of his life passed peaceably and pleasantly. Law and literature divided his studious hours. He attended the northern circuit with a fair promise of professional popularity; but his biographer admits that in his inmost heart Mr Tytler loved the law only as a branch of literature—believes that, as a profession, he never really loved it at all. However, for several years he did his best to like it.

Pleasantly alternating with the business of his life, we find summer visits and wanderings, an expedition to Norway, much social enjoyment at the Bannatyne Club or with the Mid-Lothian yeomanry—of which club and corps Tytler's exuberant spirits, ready faculty of song-writing, and beautiful voice in song-singing, made him a conspicuous and popular member. He tried his pen, too, in the early pages of *Blackwood*, and what with study and society, he must have lived only too fast, for, at a very early age, we find him recording that his friends often told him that his brow was already wrinkled and marked with furrows, and that for so young a man it 'was a shame that this should be so.'

It was about the year 1823 that he began, according to Mr Burgon, to exemplify what was with him, in after-years, a favourite literary precept—namely, that an author, instead of frittering away his energies on a multitude of subjects of minor interest, should, as soon as practicable, take up some large inquiry, and then make it the business of his literary life to prosecute that inquiry with exclusive attention; making his other studies subsidiary to his own great master-study, and reading every book with a constant reference to this one ruling object of his ambition. Tytler had a hereditary love of history; his legal studies had familiarised him with that of his own country; he began to feel that 'law, too jealous to brook the presence of a rival,' and evidently a rival preferred, was fast forsaking him, and that he was capable of fuller development and worthier success in another department of enterprise. So much for predisposing causes; but it was 'an evening at Abbotsford' which decided his fate. It was Sir Walter Scott who suggested to him the scheme of writing a History of Scotland, remarking that he knew his tastes and favourite pursuits lay so strongly in the line of history that the labour could not fail to be congenial to him . . . . and that, having the advantage of youth on his side, he might live to complete a work which would confer a lasting benefit on his country.

At first, Tytler seems to have been a little daunted by the formidable character of the undertaking; but its labours all lay in a congenial direction, and he was not a man to shrink from labour. In the summer of 1826 he appears to have entered upon his work in good earnest. But this year had for him a still more sacred interest. He married in its spring a beautiful and accomplished woman, to whom he had been deeply attached for two years, and they settled in Edinburgh. Perhaps, if there be any point of fair criticism as to the manner in which Mr Burgon has executed his task, any 'dilemma' between the fear of withholding or revealing too much, out of which his 'instinct' has not extricated him to the satisfaction of all, it is with regard to the extracts he gives us from Mr Tytler's correspondence with his wife. Letters such as these should have been sacred to the one to and for whom alone they were written. They display no talent, they do not even individualise; they are just what any warm heart and graceful mind might have written to its dearest and nearest. We should have believed just as profoundly in Mr Tytler's conjugal devotion had they not been inserted. Letters they are to be read and re-read through happy tears, to lie upon a loving heart, to be conned over and over again, with a deepening sense of their meaning and their charm, by *the one*—not letters to appear in print thirty years later—not fitted to meet or to reward the perusal of the general reader. With *that* bliss no stranger should intermeddle. In 1828, the first baby was born, and Tytler's lot had fallen indeed upon pleasant ground; yet we already presage the quarter in which the cloud will gather. The health of the beloved Rachel, delicate from the first, grew more and more so; symptoms of consumption came on. But such love as Tytler's must of necessity cast out fear—the insupportable fear of losing. He hoped on, and therefore had energy to work indefatigably at his *History*, the first two volumes of which appeared respectively in 1828 and 1829, and were very impartially reviewed by Sir Walter Scott in the *Quarterly Review*. In the spring of 1830, Tytler found it necessary to visit London, for the purpose of consulting some of the invaluable manuscripts contained in that rich treasure-house the State Paper Office, and in the British Museum. His visit appears to have been successful as to its main object, to have introduced him to many a delightful circle; but nothing could make up for the separation from his Rachel, and as he pleasantly expressed it, he 'soon began to feel like the old gentleman who, when he lost at cards, used to say: "Baaby, I'm no diverted."' The month of June, however, restored him to his happy home. The following winter, owing to the change of ministry, Tytler lost his appointment; but he was beginning to gain by his works. The *History* went on prosperously, and two volumes of the *Scottish Worthies* were ready for publication. But the cloud—the one cloud—gathered more dark than ever. Mrs Tytler's health could no longer endure an Edinburgh winter. Torquay was the shelter fixed upon; and it supplied to every member of the little party what they most wanted: to Mrs Tytler's delicate constitution, a mild air; to her husband, literary leisure. The summer was spent in London, in daily visits to the State-Office; the next winter, in Bute.

Early in 1835 Mr Tytler appears to have felt increased anxiety respecting his wife's health; but he little knew how hopeless its state was. He thought that it would be very delightful if they could all settle for some years at Rome. Alas! his Rachel was taken from him that very spring. Her death seems to have been holy and beautiful like her life; and, sustained by the memory and the influence of her 'lofty piety,' in the extremity of her husband's anguish, 'the language of pious resignation ever swallowed up the language of heart-broken grief.'

His three children were now his constant companions; and they seem to have felt for him as he did for his excellent father. 'There is but one word,' writes his daughter, 'that can express the whole method and extent of his teaching, so powerful, so winning, so lovely to us his children; that word is *love*.' After his severe affliction, we find that Tytler returned to live with his family, and that they settled in London. He went on uninterruptedly at the State-Office and daily revelled, in 'new facts.' Could he, he writes, but have had permission to work from ten till four, instead of from eleven to three!

In 1836, Dr Gillies, historiographer for Scotland, died, and Tytler had anxiously hoped to succeed him. Political interest, however, turned the scale against him; and he bore his disappointment with his usual unfailing sweetness of temper. It was about this time that Mr Burgon first became acquainted with him; and congenial pursuits, tastes, and manners soon led to their intimacy. About this time, too, we read with interest that Tytler was examined on the Record Commission before a committee of the House of Commons, and that the measures he recommended for rendering the immense mass of information there buried in state-papers available to the country, are now—after an interval of twenty years—being strictly acted upon. Hence Mr Burgon expects a new era in the historical literature of this country; and to illustrate the reasonableness of his expectation, he gives the following fact. Tytler's suggestion was, that the *first* efforts should be *exclusively* devoted to the formation of catalogues of historical materials existing in England—catalogues containing a brief analysis of the documents they embraced; whereas the plan adopted was that of printing the documents themselves; or, rather, this was attempted, for the task proved impossible. In 1830, the publication of the correspondence of the reign of Henry VIII. began, was brought down to 1852, by which time eleven quarto volumes had appeared. There are *seven hundred folio volumes* of manuscripts belonging to that same reign. Who has a clue put into his hand to find the way through these manuscript catacombs, may well bless Mr Tytler's memory. We, with our lack of Dryasdust tendencies, turn away from them with a certain sense of relief, to the pleasant glimpses Miss Tytler affords us of family-life. Charming people have always charming servants. The Tytlers transported to London, spite of Sydney Smith's humorous denunciations, their Scotch furniture and an old Scotch woman—Allen. They could not get on without Allen. No wonder. 'The other day,' said Miss Tytler to Sydney Smith, 'we desired her to buy a large earthen pan to keep the bread in—she returned in high indignation.

"Would you believe it, leddies! I asked in ane o' the shops if they had a big brown pig for keeping our bread, and no ane o' them could make out what I meant. O but they are a far-back nation! And when I priced a haddock this morning in the fish-shop, they telt me eighteenpence. I thought I would hae fainted."'

Allen was evidently a thorough patriot, and had her misgivings about English things in general. The house in Devonshire Place might look 'all very weel;' she is not to be taken in. She can see 'that, in point o' substantiality, it's naething like what we hae left.' She discerns 'a hantle o' things that will soon need to be repaired.' And having been told that the houses in London are only built to last so many years, 'only hopes we hae nae connected ourselves wi' a frail tenement.'

Frail or not, it was a happy home. Mr Tytler's enchanting playfulness made his every return to it from the State Paper Office or elsewhere a very rapture to his children. Spite of his engrossing pursuits, of the irreparable loss his heart had known, there was ever about him a 'spirit of delight,' a healthy pleasure in little things—'the buoyant child surviving in the man,' which is one of Heaven's choicest gifts, and goes indeed further, perhaps, than any other towards brightening everyday-life and insuring affection.

But we must not omit to notice what Mr Burgon impressively conveys, that Tytler's *true* life was spent neither in the State Paper Office nor among his relatives and friends. It was a hidden thing. So religious, so cheerful, so useful, so happy a career would leave us nothing to regret, did we not find that excessive application impaired bodily health, and led to a slight paralytic seizure two years before the close of his great work in 1843. In 1844, a letter from Sir Robert Peel announced that a pension of L.200 per annum had been granted to the laborious historian, who forwards the welcome intelligence in his own playful way to Mr Burgon; and we would willingly have quoted this letter, as well as many of those to his children, had our limits allowed it. In 1845, Tytler went into second nuptials with a lady he had long known, 'of great personal attractions, fine abilities, and many accomplishments.' He was at this time contemplating a History of the Reformation; and thus, with unimpaired devotion to study, and a renewal of domestic happiness, his life seemed about to brighten into a second summer. But the incessant labours of years past had not been pursued with impunity. When will good men learn that, with regard to our physical health, it is decreed that as a man soweth, so also he shall reap? When will their conscience plead for the more strict observance of the great laws that apply to the care of these temples of the soul, and denounce their violation as disobedience to the will of God concerning us? Tytler's physical and mental energies broke down suddenly and completely. The remaining years were years of wandering from place to place in the vain search for health; of inaction and despondency, over which it were painful to dwell. He died in 1849.

Our short sketch can convey little notion of the charm of the character the biographer has so well portrayed; nor can a pen-and-ink outline give much idea of a Vandyck. But no one can, we think, have had even thus much insight into the nature of the book, without heartily agreeing with Mr Burgon that the life of a *good* man may be more instructive, and better deserving of attention, than many a more stirring biographical record.

BENONI.

Sweet earth, that holds my brightest prize,
Be wept upon by gentle skies!

Blest grave, that keeps the lovely thing,
'From his sweet dust let violets spring.'

Dear winds, that sweep the tiny bed,
Breathe lulling music o'er his head.

Hush thy wild voice of fear, great storm!
Fright not the little sleeping form.

Beat not the turf to cause him pain;
Weep quiet tears, soft summer rain!

Weave thou a fairy shroud, dear snow,
For the bright flower that sleeps below!

Drop richly here, sweet sunset light,
And dress my boy in raiment bright.

Green leaves make whisper o'er his rest,
And soothe his dreams on earth's cold breast.

O gentle water, running near,
Murmur sweet comfort to his ear.

Build here thy nest, O ringdove mild,
Talk softly to my lonely child;

Dear dove, make, too, a plaintive moan,
For the sad mother left alone.

O white-winged angels, softly bear
My darling up heaven's golden stair!

Dear God, who lov'st the little child,
Take to thyself my undefiled!

Sweet Christ, who hear'st the widow's cry,
Make haste to hear me, lest I die!

J. B.

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OLD LONDON SHOPS AND SHOPKEEPERS.

WHEN 'Ogier le Danois,' as the ancient romance tells us, returned from his two hundred years' sojourn in Faëryland to the court of his old lady-love, the French queen, we read how he stood all amazed and utterly bewildered—not at the new objects he saw around him, not at the changes which two hundred years, we should have thought, must have made in everything, but only at the unaccustomed faces that looked so wonderingly into his own. Only by the absence of those features which of yore he had so loved to look upon, only by the many strange and marvelling eyes that gazed upon him, did the aged Danish hero discover that more than six generations had passed away, and all that he had loved had long been dust.

A strange romance of two hundred years does this seem to us. Only think of a sober citizen of the Protectorate walking along the Cheapside of to-day; only imagine an Ironside pausing before the Horse Guards, or visiting the United Service Club! Nay, reduce the long period one-half, take the hundred years of the Sleeping Beauty, and picture to yourself the wigged and ruffled gentleman of George II.'s reign, with his views of Mr Pitt's ministry, and French policy, and the Pretender, and the battle of Minden, riding along Regent Street—what street could that be? and on the top of an Atlas omnibus! Or the lady with flowered brocade and little chip-hat, taking her wandering way along St Paul's Churchyard, or down King William Street, seeking in vain after Great Eastcheap and Crooked Lane—where smuggled French fans were once sold, as well as bird-cages—and looking anxiously around, almost expecting to find that the Monument itself had taken its departure too! But wherefore go back a hundred years? Reduce the period to half, to less than half, and still changes sufficient to have scared the venerable sojourner in Faëryland out of his wits, might 'Ogier le Danois' have found in the streets of London.

So I thought, passing along Cornhill the other day, impeded by alterations and 'improvements,' which seem as though they would never come to an end; and I thought on the changes that had passed over it since those Saxon times when the hill received its name from 'the Quern,' the mill that crowned its green summit. Not one of the most suggestive of London thoroughfares is Cornhill: no graceful cross ever reared its delicate pinnacles there, no 'fayre conduyte' gushing forth sweet water daily, and on high-days and holidays red wine; never did royal procession pass that way, scarcely ever civic; still Cornhill has its memories. Here—after 'the Quern,' we suppose, had been pulled down—stood the mansion of Reginald de Cornhill, that sheriff to whom King John and his son addressed so many precepts, commanding him to provide luxuries on a right royal scale for the Christmas or Whitsuntide feasts—the many pounds of costly spices, the fifty pounds of pepper, the hundredweight of almonds, and the 'thousand ells of linen' for table-cloths! What became of Reginald de Cornhill's mansion, we know not; but we next find the locality had become a general mart for 'household stuff' and apparel; and that towards the end of the same century, Henry Waleys, the lord mayor, with laudable zeal, built a structure called 'the Tunne,' which supplied the inhabitants with a double advantage, it being both a conduit and a 'cage' for disorderlies. The necessity for the latter, alas! seems to have been soon apparent, for during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Cornhill had but a bad name. Much stolen property, if undiscoverable elsewhere, was to be found here; and Lydgate, in his very curious poem of *London Lyckpenny*, tells us that here he discovered his hood, 'set to sale, other stolen goods among,' which had been snatched from his head at Westminster. Towards the close of the fifteenth century, Cornhill seems to have improved; and when, in the following century, Sir Thomas Gresham chose that locality for the site of his famous 'Bourse,' and royalty deigned to visit it, its character rose. Then substantial citizens took possession of their little shops, and their tall apprentices cried aloud: 'What do you lack?' and from generation to generation, still they kept to their little shops; and even when the great fire of London swept them all away, and there certainly was space enough to build larger, still the taste for little shops continued.

Those little low-browed shops—what a contrast to the lofty plate-glass windowed 'establishments' towering four and five stories high! What would the hooded 'fathers of the city,' some five or six hundred years ago, have said to them? What would the sober citizens of Elizabeth's days—nay, what would our own grandfathers, accustomed as their forefathers to little shops and homeliest of fittings up, have said too?

Very few readers are aware of the very recent era of 'shop improvements.' The old original 'schoppe' was really a booth, constructed of wood, and very probably, in size as well as appearance, the counterpart of the best kind of booths still to be seen at a country-fair, or the covered stalls in the old market-places. In these early times, only dealers in more durable articles or more valuable commodities kept a schoppe, homely as it was; for, from the ancient records of London, we find that fish, meat, and bread were always sold in open market. Thus, Fish Street Hill and Old Fish Street still mark the site of the old London fish-markets, even from Saxon times; and there the 'stock-fishmonger' sold his 'baconed herrings' and dried stock-fish to the lower classes during 'Black Lent;' and his pickled barbel and porpoise, and perhaps sturgeon, to the wealthier; while the fishmonger proper spread out on his ample board mackerel, whiting, mullet, the highly-prized 'Thames salmon'—unattainable dainty now—and the huge conger eel, that chief delicacy of the convent feast. We may remark in passing that our forefathers were remarkably well supplied with fish. In the lists preserved by worthy Master Stow of the various kinds sold in the thirteenth century, we find every kind now sold; and although the taste which could fancy 'porpoise' seems coarse, still, we find our forefathers were also extremely fond of roach, dace, and smelts. The chief market which supplied old London with meat was that which has survived every one of its less ancient competitors—Newgate Market. It is suggestive enough to walk into that close, crowded, provision-crammed little quadrangle, and remember that full seven centuries ago, ere half the capitals of modern Europe had existence, this market, beside St Nicholas of the Shambles, near the New-gate—it extended, however, more towards Westcheap—had its regulations for buyer and seller, its penalties for 'forestalling and regrating;' and that one of the earliest London ballads represents the butchers standing there in their blue frocks, with pole-axe in hand, selling their meat. The ancient market for bread is still designated by the name Bread Street; and here the bakers brought their bread, hot from the oven, in tumbrils, or baskets, and took their standings in the open street. Very dainty were our London forefathers as to their bread. There were numerous kinds of the finer sort—cocket, simmel, wastel—the last, so well known by name, was, we think, sweet, and frequently flavoured with spice or saffron. But the other kinds were not mere huge loaves, although white—the reader will remember the many old sayings which refer to the eating of *brown* bread as a most severe privation—but fancy bread, and in a number of really pretty shapes. Indeed, so general was this taste for delicate bread among our forefathers, that in above a score of Saxon and early English illuminated manuscripts that we have looked over, we have never once found either the huge loaf or the slice of bread. At the guest-table, the little roll, round or shuttle-shaped, is placed beside each plate; and in a marvellous illumination of Elijah fed by the ravens, his feathered purveyors are represented with what very much resembles the modern French roll.

In passing, we may remark that poultry and vegetables were also sold in the streets—the former in the markets, but the latter from street to street. The supply of poultry was large; and every kind, except the turkey, was obtainable. That bird's place was, however, well supplied by the peacock, which, so far from being, as has been generally supposed, an aristocratic dish, was sold in the London market as early as the thirteenth century, and very probably earlier. There has been great misapprehension as to our forefathers' scanty supply of vegetables; but in one of the most interesting portions of the late Mr Turner's work on *Domestic Architecture in England, from the Conquest to the End of the Thirteenth Century*—his account of our horticulture at this early period—this notion is thoroughly disproved. From contemporary documents, he proves that every vegetable now in common use, except the cucumber, and of course the potato, was well known to our forefathers; and that their supply of fruit, too, was far more abundant than might have been supposed. Apples, pears, cherries, currants, gooseberries, were in common use in the twelfth century; and peaches, quinces, medlars, and apricots, among the higher classes; while there were few of the better class of houses during the middle ages with a sunny wall against which a vine was not trained.

But where were the 'schoppes,' and what was sold in them? Well, good reader, taking you by the hand, and leading you through London streets—London streets five or six centuries ago—need I tell you there were many articles, in common use now, for which you might look in vain. Tea and coffee, cabinet-ware, fancy stationery, of course you would not expect to find; nor glass, nor china; but it is curious to note how many things there are for which even the poorest send to a shop in the present day, that during the middle ages, were made at home. Candles, both wax and tallow—except those of beautiful white or coloured wax, called 'Paris candles'—were of home manufacture; so was soap, when required; but the housewives of the middle ages, like their descendants in many parts of the country, chiefly used lye made from wood-ashes. Brooms and such-like household appliances were also home-made, and the coarser kinds of linen cloth; for weaving as well as spinning was a female domestic employment. Still, the streets displayed a goodly array of 'schoppes,' not only along the main thoroughfares, but in the less frequented streets. In the curious list of property belonging to 'the almonry' of St Paul's, and which bears the date of 1345, we find 'houses, with shops adjoining,' in Bread Street; and in Sermon Lane, 'three shops;' and the rent for these 'tribus schoppis' is the large sum of six shillings per annum each! Multiplied, to bring the sum to its present value, this would be only L.4, 10s. apiece; these must, therefore, have been the mere wooden booths before alluded to. But even along the chief thoroughfares, down to the days of Queen Elizabeth, such were the shops; and on the slanting board in front, the goldsmith of Westcheap, and in after-times, of Ludgate, placed his tall drinking-cups, and his delicately chased salt-cellars, and the enamelled spice-plate, and brooches and clasps of costliest workmanship; and along the 'Mercery' the mercer displayed rich damasks and velvets, and precious 'gold baudekin;' and the 'Milaner,' or haberdasher of those days, his miscellaneous collection of inlaid knives, and gold-wrought purses, and broidered gloves, and hawks' bells of filigreed silver. No wonder that the proprietor and his ''prentices tall' walked constantly up and down in front, keeping guard over this precious store.

It could not be because our forefathers were but half-civilised, as we have been gravely told, that they occupied such homely 'schoppes.' With the beautiful conduit of Westcheap, and the still more beautiful cross constantly before their eyes; with the fair windows of the chapel of St Thomas reflecting the sunlight, surely the wealthy traders of Goldsmith's Row and the Mercery might have managed to construct a comfortable shop with glass windows; but they evidently did not care to do so. 'Good wine needs no bush' was a favourite proverb with them; and we think that they really considered that the beautiful and costly goods they proffered for sale required no setting off. The plate-glass window, the brass fittings, the French-polished counter of the nineteenth century, we doubt if they would have cared for; and, indeed, the utter trash sometimes to be seen within these splendid shop-windows would have made them stare. 'Flowers, 2¾d. a spray,' heaped up behind a square of glass that could scarcely have cost less than twenty guineas!

Towards the close of the fifteenth century, John Wood, citizen and goldsmith, caused a row of houses, richly decorated, to be built at the upper end of Westcheap for the brethren of his guild. But here, although quaint ornaments covered each story, and the lattice-windows extended along the whole width of the house, each shop was unglazed; and the pent-house, from whence hung the sign, alone protected the precious store from the weather. Perhaps our forefathers' love of fresh air might also have some share in continuing this fashion of unglazed shop-windows; for even after the fire of London, and when these tall, red brick-houses in Cheapside were built on the site of the Mercery, the shops, although intended for some of the chief city traders, were made open, exactly as though for a fishmonger. It has often been remarked how long old habits and old customs linger in remote places; for our own part, we have often remarked how persistingly old customs linger among inhabitants who have been long settled in cities—as though the antiquity of the place communicated its influence to those who had long dwelt there; and thus has it doubtless been that generation after generation of London traders went on quietly in their little unglazed shops, keeping to the thrifty motto, 'Keep your shop, and your shop will keep you,' and looking forward to the time when they should retire from business; perchance to a country-house, there to enjoy the 'otium cum dignitate' of the citizen a hundred years ago, that of smoking a comfortable pipe with an old friend in the little summer-house perched on the wall. Very slowly indeed did the glazed shop-window make its appearance. An aged relative of our own well remembers some eighty years ago being taken to a first-rate glove-shop in Sweetings Alley for gloves; she used to tell, when remarking upon the costly fittings-up of modern shops, how this was a mere wooden booth with a penthouse; and behind the wooden counter the proprietor, wearing his hat, and well wrapt up in winter, used to stand, while a broad bench fixed against the wall was the only accommodation for his customers. This was the genuine 'schoppe' of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; but scarcely superior were the booksellers' shops in St Paul's Churchyard and Little Britain, with the broad shelving board in front, on which the newest publications of the seventeenth and the earlier part of the eighteenth centuries were laid. A pleasant arrangement this for the poor scholar, who might thus, like 'Alton Locke,' glance at a book which the glass-window would have effectually kept from him. Perhaps the old fashion of the unclosed window lingered latest in this vicinity of any. Even some twenty or thirty years ago, most of the clothiers' shops in Cloth Fair were open to wind and weather.

Among the earliest traders who adopted shop improvements, were the mercers and haberdashers; but what they gained in outward appearance, they must have well-nigh lost in the deteriorated appearance of their goods. How dull must the scarlets and orange-colours have looked, how faded the lilacs, behind those thick dingy, green glass panes, enclosed in their clumsy wooden frames. The reader may see the little shop of some hundred years ago and its wigged proprietor 'to the very life' in Mulready's pleasant 'Choosing the Wedding-gown.' And just such a shop was 'Lavie and Garth's, at the Blackamoor's Head, Cheapside,' when, in the year 1758, the young lady purchased her wedding-dress of 'white enamelled ducape,' as the bill, yellow with age, in its faded ink, before me records, with flourished capitals, and a marvellous feat of penmanship intended to typify 'received.' Those mean-looking shops, not worthy even to stand afar off in some by-street of the present day, did, however, a good business. Forty-two pounds is the amount of the whole bill; for white sarsnet, and black paduasoy, and a 'pink-spotted lutestring,' aided to swell the sum-total; and then in how gentlemanly a way was business conducted. Among the smaller articles are two pair of embroidered satin slippers, at eight shillings the pair; one pair of these is charged for, but against the other is a dash, to shew that the well-pleased proprietors of the 'Blackamoor's Head' begged the young lady's acceptance of them. Talk of modern shops with their 'dreadful sacrifices,' and all manner of things 'to be literally given away'—when did the reader ever obtain even the odd half-penny there?

There was much formal politeness among these old-fashioned shop-keepers. A story was told me in my childhood of one of these, who, being at Bath, was actually mistaken for a dancing-master, so unexceptionable was his bow, until one of his old customers recognised him as Mr Somebody in Fleet Street, of whom she had bought her much-admired brocade. A story too was current among the London 'prentices of a rather older date, of how a silversmith's apprentice so charmed a charming young lady with a fortune of ten thousand pounds—which was the 'regulation' sum with our great-grandfathers—that, although she was brought to his master's shop by her intended, to purchase the plate previously to their marriage, she found the apprentice so much more 'a gentleman' than her fox-hunting admirer, that she broke off with the squire, and bestowed herself and her money upon the fortunate young man.

Well, this politeness, formal as it was, was pleasant; and as past times were not go-ahead times, but the buyer bought, and the seller sold, with due deliberation, there was time for the low bow, or the courtesy, and the quiet remark about the weather, and some opinions about the spring-fashions too; and thus the purchase of half a yard of 'book-muslin' might fill up a pleasant half-hour; or the choice of a ribbon occupy—interspersed with a little gossip—almost an hour. People certainly must have taken both shopping and shop-keeping fair and softly in those good old times; for how deliberately did the old couple—the last of the ancient shopkeepers, I think they must have been—whose shop was the first I ever entered, welcome their customers, and inquire what they wished for, and open the drawer, or take down the box, while a modern white-neckclothed assistant, in some 'Crystal Palace Emporium,' would have sold half-a-dozen 'desperate bargains.' What contrast was that little, low shop, nestling under the old church-wall, like a martin's nest, to any of modern times! Some eight feet wide, it was with its little window of greenish glass, and its little counter of painted deal, and the old man in a bob-wig and brown coat, and his wife in a clear-starched muslin cap, bound round with a blue ribbon, and her gown of brownish colour, and the neckerchief fastened with the little gold pin—a quiet, worthy couple, who welcomed you with a pleasant smile, and fetched a chair out of the parlour for you, though you might only have called in for two rows of pins, or to match a skein of silk. How leisurely, after you were duly seated, would they put on their spectacles, and after some passing remark on the weather, at length ask what should they have the pleasure of serving you with. There was not much to serve, one might have thought, in that little shop, for small show was there in the little window. Some half-dozen pieces of galloon, some tapes peeping out of their dark-blue papers, pins in shining rows, some silk handkerchiefs, and a little shawl, hung cornerwise, to the serious darkening of the already dark shop. Still, somehow, there were few things you might ask for but from some unsuspected nook or corner they were forthcoming. It was a pleasant sight to me, as I sat on the counter, while my nurse, dear good Susan, had a pleasant bit of gossip with the old people, to see a whole drawerful of ribbons taken, as it seemed to me, out of the wall, or a roll of flannel produced from under the counter, though almost as large as the counter itself. But one day, what a beautiful sight was provided for me from the inmost recesses of that magical counter! How well do I remember the old lady stooping down, and drawing forth from that inexhaustible receptacle a huge wash-leather bundle. Dingy enough, unattractive enough was it outside; but oh! when the bundle was opened, and silks of every shade and colour were spread out before me; and the coy sun, who did not too often visit that little shop, peeped in, giving a brighter tinge to the greens and the blues, and intensifying the rose-colours and crimsons—what 'a vision of fair colours' was that—what a feast for the wondering eyes of the child not three years old! It seemed as though the rainbow itself had been brought down, to be not only looked at, but to be touched and handled—to become a child's very plaything! Never has that 'vision of fair colours' faded from my mind; and heartily do I join with Mr Ruskin in his most eloquent denunciation of all drabs and stone-colours, and browns of every shade.

And that worthy old couple—there they continued, almost until the introduction of plate-glass windows, quite contented in their little shop, and laying by money, too, even although some years afterwards a large new shop—no, 'emporium,' for so the handbills, with a splendid vignette at the top, displaying bales of Irish linen, and rolls of silk, bound together with wreaths of roses, designated it—was opened hard by. Marvellously were the two shop-windows decorated—ribbons, lace, scarfs, and flowers; the last but seldom seen then, except at a milliner's, and great was the crowd outside. If only one-third had gone in to buy! Some ventured, but the result seemed scarcely satisfactory. It was 'a shop on the new plan;' and the old-fashioned people of this locality, accustomed to quieter doings, were 'put out' with the wide shop, and its two counters, and the staff of assistants, male and female, who bustled about, and asked if you wanted 'anything more,' before they had served you with what you came to purchase, and teased you with 'wonderful bargains' of gloves and flowers, when you were inquiring the price of flannel. So the old folk soon went back again to the little old shop for their haberdashery, and to the 'old-established shop,' with the sign of the Golden Sun, huge as a cart-wheel, over the door, for their linens and calicoes; and a speedy end might have been put to the 'emporium,' but for a bright thought of the proprietor, who just before Christmas half filled one of his windows with Berlin wool 'at reduced prices.' 'Berlin wool,' and the artistic abominations perpetrated by its means, were just then beginning to turn half the young ladies' heads. So to the 'emporium' they flocked, purchasing Berlin wool 'at reduced prices,' but all manner of other things at prices rather increased for the occasion. A capital hit was this; so the proprietor gave a ball at Christmas, and began to calculate how rich he should be by the end of the next year. But competition is a game that many can play at; and one fine spring morning he was startled by the apparition of workmen at the large house over the way—that huge, dirty house, which had belonged to the drysalter, and which had been long shut up; and there were the old windows taken out, and new put in, and a splendid mahogany counter soon made its appearance. Another 'emporium' was evidently about to be opened, and so, shortly after, it was, with 'wonderful bargains'—the days of 'dreadful sacrifices' were not as yet—and little boys stood on the foot-pavement thrusting lists of these bargains into everybody's hands. From henceforward there was bitter strife between the rival shops—strife that would have awakened the astonishment and indignation of the old London shopkeepers, who saw in each member of the same trade a brother, and who, in recognition of that brotherhood, feasted with him in the hall of his guild, and aided him in sickness, and duly followed his remains to the grave.

Meanwhile, the worthy old couple died, and were laid to rest in the adjoining church; and erelong, on both houses, 'These Desirable Premises to Let,' told the neighbourhood the result of that reckless game of competition. The neighbourhood has altered since then; most of the shops have become wholesale houses, but the little low-browed shop still nestles against the old church-wall; and never do I pass that way, but I look with pleasant reminiscences upon it, for brightly again rises to my mind that child's 'vision of fair colours.'

A WIFE'S DISTRESSES.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS born an heiress. The day I entered the world, my poor dear mother left it. I was her first and only child; and my father, who loved her passionately, was sadly grieved at his loss. The very light of his eyes was gone, and in her place he had only me—a sickly, irritating baby, so poor a comfort, and so great a care. Mamma's property was secured to me, and till I came of age, papa was to enjoy the interest of it. Dear papa, how faithfully he carried out all the implied conditions of that will; how tenderly he loved me, not surely for my own sake, but for hers that was gone. He spared neither time nor expense to make me the most accomplished of my sex; everything that could possibly tend to improve me, mentally or physically, was freely granted, and I grew up fully prepared to support the position that came to me by birth. But as the sunshine seldom lasts through the day, my good, dear, self-sacrificing papa was taken from me when I was on the eve of womanhood, and at the most critical period of life. He did his best to secure me from my inevitable dangers; he left for my guardians his two cousins and former companions, who were honest above suspicion, and only anxious to do their duty to me. Under their care I continued my studies, and still lived in seclusion, spending only the interest of the interest of my fortune; and so I grew and grew, and lived on in an ideal world, dreaming rather than acting, and feeding an already too active imagination. But there are few lives so quiet that have not some gay occasions, and so it happened to me when I was somewhat past twenty. I was staying with my aunt at Horngrave, which happened to be the head-quarters of the Wessex militia. Wherever there are military, there are sure to be music and dancing. A ball celebrated the conclusion of the period of annual training, and everybody in Horngrave was going. I protested to all my acquaintances that I did not care for balls—that I had never danced much—and that my guardians, I knew, did not think well of those promiscuous meetings in country towns. But flattery soon conquered all my scruples. I could not resist being told that with my beauty and my known wealth I should be the pride of the ball. And why, thought I, have these advantages, and not enjoy them? It was a mischievous spirit that urged me to such an exhibition of vanity; but who that has felt the pleasure of being admired, can refrain sometimes from indulging in it? I went to the ball with some friends, and dressed, I felt, to perfection; I wore some of my family jewels, which were valuable enough to shew every one my wealth, even if it were not known.

How brilliant, how gay, how unlike everything else in our quiet monotonous lives, a well-lighted ball-room is—how fairy-like and bewitching the elegances of costume, how joyous the atmosphere, how inspiriting the music of the dance. I had not been in the room ten minutes before I felt how flat and tame my life had hitherto been as compared with the enchanting present. I was not wrong in the anticipation of my success. I was eagerly sought as a partner, and engaged for every dance of the evening. I used to fancy young men were much alike; tall or short, dark or fair, they always appeared to say the same things, to have the same ambitions, objects, and thoughts; to be, in short, uniformly uninteresting. I came back from that ball an altered being. One there was who had danced more often with me, who seemed to say precisely what I cared to listen to, to think precisely what I felt, and to meet my ideal of a man in some unaccountably wonderful way. I *do* believe in love at sight; and I am convinced that I could no more help loving that man, than I could have felt a passion for any other of my partners. He was a Captain Norman. His father I had heard mentioned as a cold, stern, hard-hearted aristocrat; while the son was as kind and generous as if all his ancestors had been professional philanthropists. I fancied he was pleased with me; otherwise, why did he dance again and again with me, and why did he hope, when we parted, that we should meet again? I heard him answer to some question put by a bystander, 'Very, very charming.' Was it I?

But now the ball was over, there was a reaction, and I felt sadder and duller than I had ever been before. But my pride was roused. I would display my wealth in some way, and not live on as if pinched by poverty. I was fond of driving. I would have a pair of ponies, and drive them myself; there would, at least, be some excitement about that. I was quite right, and enjoyed myself exceedingly; but was it not partly in the hope of meeting Captain Norman that I acted thus? At any rate, I did meet him, and, of course, as opportunities will occur when hearts are willing, we improved our acquaintance. I was soon desperately in love. I believe I would have given up all for that man, even then. He was no less ardent; and seeing, as he must have done, my disposition, he was not slow in breathing his vows, and asking my love. It had been given long before, though in secret; and now there had been mutual confession. How smoothly everything went in the dreams of that happy hour—nothing was wanting but my guardians' consent, for I was not yet of age, and for that I impatiently waited. At length their answer came; it was written in the joint-name of both, and was as kind in expression and feeling as their letters had ever been. It made me feel very, very sad, and almost wicked in my love; and yet, in what they told me, there was no appearance of ill feeling; their honesty was unimpeachable, and what purpose could their warnings serve? Still my betrothed husband, my beau-idéal, was, in their language, a very doubtful, even dangerous character. 'His family is aristocratic by birth, but seldom visited, and there is a hereditary danger in the blood; he is known to be fascinating, and very clever, an admirable actor [this cut me to the heart], but changeable, violent, unreliable.' They warned me to beware of letting my feelings be too much engaged, as such an alliance could not result well. This letter was the first great shock I had ever had; my life hitherto had been so calm, that I was quite unprepared for such a blow. It seemed to me that all the world opposed our union, and combined to make me wretched; but this feeling, in itself, only drew me closer to Arthur. To his impatient pleadings for our union, I urged my present dependence, and the impossibility of marriage till I was of age, which would occur in three months. This interval passed in a mixed state of anxiety and pleasure; delight in the society of Arthur, but with a constantly irritating remembrance of the warning I had received. At length, my birthday drew so near that I determined to see my lawyer, and make my own disposition of my property, to be signed when of age. Arthur nobly asked nothing from me, though he must have known my wealth, and I knew his comparative poverty. In a feeling of generosity at his noble disinterestedness, I determined to give him the half of my property irrevocably, but to reserve for the day he should call me wife to tell him what I had done. On the evening before my birthday and our wedding-day, I received a large packet of papers from my late guardians—kind, pensively kind, but unaltered in expression. In resigning their charge, they said that my conduct had been exemplary during the whole period of their duties; they had never had any difference with me, and every recommendation save one had been dutifully attended to. 'Now I was my own mistress, and although they must deeply regret the step I was about to take, they earnestly trusted that their former anticipations might prove incorrect, and that my future lot might be as happy as my merits deserved.' I wrote them a grateful answer, and thanked them from my heart for all their services. The next day, I was married. The wedding was quite private; neither Arthur nor I cared to have it gay; to me, he was all in all, and no numbers could have given me additional pleasure. A small party at breakfast, a few tears, and then we left for a long wedding-tour, that had been arranged previously.

CHAPTER II.

For the first few months our lives were as happy as it seems to me possible for human lives to be; indeed, after such happiness, we must expect to have much that is desolate and sad, or our lot on earth would not be what we know it is. I will not say that I did not discover in Arthur some signs of a naturally impetuous temper, in fact, some faults; but he was not at all the less charming than before marriage, and his love for me seemed firm and strong. We made a great tour of some seven months or more, and visited in succession everything that is worth seeing in Europe. We travelled in great state—Arthur had his own valet, I, my maid—and we engaged the most accomplished courier at, I must confess, rather an extravagant rate. His salary was as large as the most gifted man of his age could have earned by any occupation other than that of music; but he was 'unique.' I forget how it was that we stayed so long at Baden-Baden on our return home; but I had not been so well, and Arthur thought rest would restore me. However, it was there that Arthur's manner first altered to me; he was less attentive, less devoted than before. I sometimes fancied that he stayed away to help on my recovery, as his presence always excited me. One evening, I know not why, after passing the greater part of the day in filling up a sketch made in Rome, I felt an unusual wish to join the gay throng in the Kursaal. I waited, thinking Arthur would return, intending to ask him to take me there. I waited some time—it was rather late—and he had usually returned before. I determined to go and seek him myself; and hastily changing my dress, and somewhat concealing my features, I set forth on my search. I looked for him in vain in many a well-lighted saloon; he was not among the dancers. I thought he might possibly be detained in some more than usually fascinating waltz; but no. I was afraid of being recognised by some of our numerous acquaintances, but fortunately I was not. At length I reached that room of rooms which makes Baden-Baden a Vesuvius of danger—that crater of excitement which swallows all its victims—the gambling-table. As I entered, a pang shot through my frame; Arthur surely could not be there. The old doubtful warning flashed before me, and I felt fearfully wretched, but it was but for a moment. Before my eyes were the tables, and seated round that mixture of every age and country, to whom alike, savage and civilised, gambling is the common pleasure. I stood half-concealed in the crowd that surrounded the players. The stakes were evidently high, for little gold was passing, and memoranda on paper were mostly exchanged. The game must indeed be exciting, for although a perfect stranger to it, even as a spectator, I was interested, almost bewildered, in watching it. Opposite to me was one of the players, who soon absorbed my attention, to the exclusion of all the others. I followed his play with all my attention, though I could not tell why. In my absorption, I forgot the motive that brought me there. There was a striking resemblance to some face I knew well that riveted me, and yet my brain whirled to such a degree I could not tell whose image it was. His hair was dark and curling, his forehead clear and high, the whole face intellectual, while a rather heavy moustache detracted from the otherwise open expression. His dress was peculiar. The excitement of the game played in every muscle of his face. He was evidently a habitual gambler: he received his gains and paid his losses with a manner that proved his habits. But to-night how fearfully was he losing! Time after time, fortune went against him, and check after check left his hands. His manner, though still restrained, was becoming violent. At last he lost once more: I felt it was his ruin, for he rose—a burning spot on each cheek—and stood with glaring eyes, looking before him. Our eyes met: his face glowed with the reflection of a furnace, and then turned deadly pale. Oh, agony! that moment had revealed all. In those eyes, in that burning face, in that marble reaction, I beheld—I knew it at once, despite the false moustache and deceptive costume—my husband, my Arthur, my adored—false to his honour, for he had promised me not to play! Oh, that fatal warning—too late, too late! I had no time to think, for in an instant he was beside me. ‘You dare,’ he said, ‘to pry into my amusements, to follow me in disguise;’ and, madman that he was, he gave me a blow that bore me to the ground.

I remember nothing more. When I awoke in the morning, after a distressing, restless night, I was in a raging fever: the doctor pronounced me in a very critical state; nothing but perfect quiet could save my life, and how was that to be obtained when my anxieties must be permanent? But where was Arthur? Was he ashamed to appear, or had he returned desperately to his ruin? I implored his servant to try and find him, and was in agonies till he came back. No; he was not at the Kursaal. I felt at least a thrill of delight. At length I gained some sleep, and felt more composed, when I was again disturbed by the sound of footsteps: I asked who it was. My maid Emma went out to see. I heard expostulations, and excited language, and then a groan. What could it mean? Had Arthur, in despair, attempted—— I was out of bed in an instant, and was on the stairs beside the bearers and the body. Yes, it was he; but oh!—blood, blood—he had done it. I was the murderer of my husband. I fell helpless into the arms of the attendants, and remember nothing more, till I found myself in bed, doctors beside me, my hair cut short, my lips parched, my head burning hot. ‘Where is he?’ cried I. ‘Arthur, forgive me.’ They covered my lips, and enforced silence. He is better, much better: thank Heaven, he lived; then I was forgiven. By unremitting care, I grew daily stronger, and in a week I was safely delivered of a girl. I never expected to recover, but nature, so strong and beneficent, supported me. I was not allowed to hear much of Arthur, but I felt easy about him, and his recovery, like mine, was quick. The little darling, unconscious of these troubles, was lively and happy as a princess. Three weeks after, I was allowed to meet Arthur. He was much altered; his gay manner quite gone, his face wan and haggard, his eye restless and nervous. But for the voice, and some other characteristics, I could not have recognised him. What mingled feelings of joy and pain I had at seeing him again! I loved him devotedly still, but respect, the conscious feeling of duty, was gone. We talked little. He appeared to like our baby. Soon the doctors ordered us back to our rooms: there, in weariness, I asked Emma to give me the Baden paper, which I saw lying unopened on the table. I turned it over, looking restlessly over the announcements of new gaieties, which did not at all interest me; but my eye caught this paragraph: ‘Duel at Baden.’ I thought duelling had retired from good society long ago. ‘A duel was fought about three weeks ago between an English gentleman and a German baron: the affair and its cause have been hushed up, and we have not been able to arrive at particulars, but the Englishman was severely wounded.’ There could be no mistake. Arthur was the Englishman, and Baron de Gronold, in defending my sex's honour, had fought my husband for striking me a blow.

Misery—utter desolation: what can equal the agony of those moments! Ill as I was, I resolved at once to return with baby to England. Never, never again could I live with Arthur. I was degraded, deceived; and fiercely as my love had burned, my passion raged. I would see him once more, demand an account of his pecuniary position, and then leave him for ever. His broken appearance nearly overcame my resolution, but I would not be deceived any more. He had spent every farthing of what I had given him; besides this, his debts, old and new, amounted to thousands. It was nearly all I had. Then there was my child; my duty to that, and my submission to my husband. No—all should go to pay his debts. I would earn my livelihood, and he should at least be clear. All was realised, and flowed in a golden stream to relieve his necessities. At last, every claim was satisfied, and, with my child, I bade him a last farewell. Not a vestige of his former self remained. The hereditary malady of my guardians' warning had seized him, and he was fading fast away: nature and life were fast killing him. I spared all I could to leave him the comforts of life. Weak as I had been, I was now determined to act energetically. Arrived in England, I returned to Horngrave, which I had left so happy—a humble lodging my dwelling, my child all my joy.

CHAPTER III.

Seventeen years passed over—years spent in close economy, in careful thought over every small outgoing, and anxious attention for Ellen, now growing up. Nothing more had I heard of Arthur. Since the day we parted, my life had been calm, but it had been the calm of melancholy. The blow I had received could not be effaced—there were dreams, visions that beset me night and day, and destroyed my rest. Still young, I was broken in health, and needed comforts my means could not now procure. But I had truly learned the lesson of adversity, and felt how much more our happiness depends on our internal resources, than on outward means. As far as my circumstances would admit, Ellen had received a good education; it was my boast that at least she was brought up as a gentlewoman, and that, let the worst come, she was worthy of her hire as a governess—she was qualified to earn a livelihood. I heard little of the few surviving members of my family, and that little not to their advantage. One uncle I knew was very rich, but I had neither the necessity nor the desire to ask his bounty. He lived mostly in Ireland, and was reputed popular among his tenants. It was the beginning of summer—I remember well the evening—Ellen and I were sitting in the full glory of the sunset, when a letter was delivered to me, containing the startling intelligence of my uncle's death, and the discovery of a will giving all his property to me. I was not—I had not been for seventeen years greedy for money; but the power, the influence, the resources of wealth were not lost on me, and in that moment I was overcome with thankfulness. Half my anxieties and cares these long years had been pecuniary, and now, thank Heaven, they were past. The lawyer's letter recommended an immediate departure for Ireland, to secure my possessions. Ellen and I speedily prepared for our journey, and were soon *en voyage*. Killigreen, my uncle's mansion, was a perfect type of an Irish residence—a village attached to the estate—a park in neglected condition—a large rambling house, bearing marks of its open, universal use and accommodation—its furniture decayed—its retainers and servants out of number—dogs and horses breeding and increasing in its paddocks and kennels—every sign of profuseness and neglect; and yet the real value of the estate was large—L.4000 a year, free from any drawbacks or deductions. There was no doubt about the bequest—the will was clear and distinct—'To my niece, Mrs Norman, I bequeath all my estates, lands, and hereditaments.' Our reign commenced. The local newspapers teemed with the accounts of the great rejoicings at the revived fortunes of the present possessors. All the neighbours of importance did us the honour of a visit. For months, Killigreen was a scene of festivity and rejoicing. Everything about the place, as far as possible, was kept as it was. It was about six months after we had been in possession, as Ellen and I were examining some old books in the library, I observed Ellen pick up a paper that fell from an old volume, and read it with apparent interest; suddenly, she uttered a shriek, and fell fainting on the carpet. I was naturally alarmed, and anxiously raised her from the ground: 'My darling, what is the matter?'

'The will! the will!' was all she uttered; and taking the paper from the ground, I read our doom in a moment. This deed was of a later date than that acted upon, and reversing all former bequests, bequeathed the entire estates to a Hospital for the Blind. I could hardly breathe—I could barely understand where I was. Was it not a dream?—a phantasy of the night? Surely I was at Horngrave, in our old cottage; and Killigreen and all its wealth a midnight fancy. If otherwise, how could I return to the rightful possessors what I had spent—the lavish expenditure of the last few months? Here is the paper, but what is to prevent me in a moment from destroying all evidence of an altered intention? And indeed the temptation was strong. I held in my hands the destiny of myself and daughter—the title-deed to fortune and happiness, or to distress and care; but, thank Heaven, in that moment my better angel preserved me from a sin I dare not think of. Ellen and I, though bathed in tears, were resolved not a moment should be lost to place the recovered will beyond the power of destruction. We wrote to our lawyer, enclosing the document, and praying him to act as quickly as possible; we wished to retire from our false position at once. Judge of the morality of the man when we received for answer his advice to keep the matter secret! There was no moral necessity for us, he wrote, to injure ourselves; it was the *duty* of those whom it concerned to urge their claims. Seeing his obtuseness, I wrote to the secretary to the hospital, telling my story, and praying for immediate action. It was not long in taking place. An order to surrender the house and estate came within forty-eight hours, and not long after, a claim for the rents received. Then I felt the bitterness of our lot—to resign all voluntarily, and then to be called on to reproduce what was gone. My lawyer, after the surrender of our claim, abandoned all attention to our cause, and left us to the hands of our successors. As a public body, they had no individual feeling, and acted on so-called disinterested grounds: suffice it to say, that we quitted the estate impoverished more than when we came there. My annuity, small as it was before, was eaten up by the law-expenses and other charges on surrender. One month later, we were again in our old quarters at Horngrave. No longer independent, Ellen was now forced to earn something to complete our livelihood, and doubly thankful was I that she could do so. She bore bravely up against our misfortunes; the very necessity for action seemed to brace her. But my cup was not yet full.

We had hardly returned to our old quiet life before it was fearfully disturbed. One day I had been out alone for a walk, while Ellen was at home with her pupils, engaged at a music-lesson. On my return, I was surprised to see a male figure in our sitting-room, to see him bending over her as she played, and then actually to clasp her to his breast and kiss her. I could only see his back, and my heart beat so violently I could hardly breathe. What more was I to bear? To see the affection of my only blessing won from me by a stranger; to see him embrace her before my eyes, and she too to submit. I was hardly sensible, but I managed to enter the room. As the door opened, Ellen burst into my arms, and cried: 'Papa, papa has returned! He is here—he is here!' I knew no more till I awoke upon my bed; and saw standing at the foot, the man who had ruined all my hopes and happiness, still, in his corrupt beauty, faded as it was, and beside him, our daughter, more like him than I had ever conceived. Oh that I had lived to see the day! Had the news of my late fortune brought him back, like a vulture, to the prey? Or was he penitent? Was he to return as a prodigal, and were we now at last to be happy?

My illness was very severe; the recent shock coming upon my already weakened frame, made it even critical, and for days I was unconscious; and what my unrestrained tongue gave vent to, I cannot tell, but they were burning words—the pent-up thoughts and troubles of years—strange combinations of the past and present, all clustering round one centre—the man who wronged me, who had so broken all his vows. But as I mended, the lowering clouds that so disturbed me cleared away, and I saw, day by day, and hour by hour, although without fairly realising it, Arthur, the cause of all my cares, ever about my bed, and, with Ellen, anticipating my every wish. I never missed him; he seemed to live in the room, and, weak as I was, I saw an expression of deep anxiety and interest in his face which was new indeed. They seldom spoke to me, for the doctor's orders were for silence; but in my drowsy state I saw them often talking together, and he reading to her while she worked. Little as I could realise all the blessedness of the change, it wrought a wonderful effect on me; it gave the healing peace of mind I chiefly needed, and worked the cure. Soon I was convalescent, for, the crisis past, nature hastened to restore itself, and then with joys bright as the fresh beauties of the rising sun, life seemed young again, and with a horizon still that promised happiness. The tale were long to tell of all that happened in those weeks of illness: to me they had been lost time, but to my child and husband they were indeed momentous; and happy was the suffering that bore such joyful fruit; for Ellen told me that when I lay unconscious and hardly breathing, her father, struck with the memory of former days, touched by the old love that once burned within him, knelt by my side, and gazed steadfastly in my face. He spoke not, but the working of his features told the mind within. Noiselessly, Ellen came and knelt beside him, and, placing an arm round his waist, claimed him as her parent. Flesh and blood could no longer resist this fresh call on his sympathy. In a voice hoarse and broken with emotion, he cried: 'I have been a villain—a base villain! Your mother was an angel; she gave up everything for me. No, Ellen, I will go—I will not darken your life, as I have hers. Tell her, only tell her, when she recovers, that I have gone, never to forget this day. She may hear of me again, but not as of old. If it is not too late, I will yet do something worthy of her love.' And here he rose to go.

Ellen flung herself upon his breast, and told him all the strange vicissitudes of fortune, the close economy of Horngrave life, the bright prospect of Killigreen, the noble self-sacrifice, and how that I loved him still. She was sure that my life was desolate and dreary; as her tale was telling, his eye brightened, his colour came; and when she ceased, he clasped her to his heart. 'Your mother has been, and is, a perfect woman. I will reform, by the love I once swore to bear her, by the vow to cherish her; and you, Ellen, shall be my monitor—you shall restore me, and be the mediator between your mother and me.' As he spoke, he knelt by my bed, and kissed me with an earnestness he had never known before. From that moment, the promise was fulfilled. But I had something yet to hear, and bitterly at the moment did it affect me, though now the recollection of it is a great comfort. My troubles had been partly my own causing. After the wretched night when Arthur lost so much, I had acted wildly and imprudently; gambling had been a passion with him, and he had generally been successful; in fact, he looked upon it as a certain source of income, and, poor as he was, he did not like his dependence upon my fortune. Attempting to win by cards and fortune wealth for himself, he lost nearly all that belonged to me by right. In the agony of loss, he had struck a blow he could never forget; he was mad at that moment; the fiend had him at command. The duel, and his and my illness, maintained this deplorable state of mind: he was jealous of the baron, and even doubted my faithfulness. My subsequent coolness hurried things to a crisis; he was persuaded that the baron and I had leagued together to destroy him, and in this conviction desperately plunged into dissipation: then I left him for England; and soon after the baron left Baden too. For months he had been ill; an old friend of his family had found him in great distress, and left him money sufficient for immediate need. On his recovery, despairing of ever regaining my love, and hating his own country, he determined to go to India and begin life anew. He had powerful friends there, who procured him such an appointment as he was in need of. He was appointed resident at the barbarous court of Oude, and there his reckless courage gained him vast influence over the savage chiefs and nobles. By careful management, he gained a considerable fortune; and then, sobered and more content to live, thought of returning to England to satisfy his conscience about me; for at times he had thought that his suspicions, strong as they were, might be wrong, and that even then I might be waiting in faithful poverty for his return. He journeyed to Calcutta, and took passage in a homeward-bound vessel, with his property in gold and jewels on board. By a singular fatality, the vessel was lost, and he was the only passenger who escaped. After much hardship, the passengers and crew were saved by a passing vessel, and he at length reached England with a heart almost broken by misfortune. Casually, he read in an old county newspaper the account of our Killigreen fortune and subsequent loss; and with a heart bursting with mingled feelings, he hurried to Horngrave, and found Ellen alone, as I have described. Then came my illness; in the long weeks of watching, his better feelings gained the victory; and, ennobled by misfortune, he found at length the happiness he had long deemed as lost.

His services in India soon procured him an appointment at home, and though we are still poor, we have enough for all our wants. Arthur, no longer young, no longer handsome as he was, seems to me more beautiful than ever. Our trials are over; he has done all he promised: he is faithful, and our happiness is secure. We do not own a Killigreen; but we married Ellen from a happy home, and her children now delight their grandmother's heart.

MORAL SKETCHES FROM THE BIRD-WORLD.

IN TWO PARTS—PART II.

A YOUNG black-cap is, next to the nightingale, the loveliest and most melodious singer. He is modest and coy, yet confidential, gentle, and lively. He swells his little black cap into a crest, turns himself in a semicircle, hops and flies about at short intervals, and utters at the same time his peculiar clacking sounds. Just as in the beginning, he is very confidential towards us, and receives his food from my hands; he knows so well the time and manner of our employments, that he never fails on a morning, when the coffee is on the table, nor at dinner-time, to hop out of his cage—whose door is always open—and perch upon the table, where he takes a sip out of a coffee-cup, or nibbles at a lump of sugar, or attempts to swallow a whole round of bread. If the latter be lying on the edge of the table, he firmly seizes hold of it with his beak, and rather than let it go, will allow himself to be dragged to the ground by its weight. He is particularly fond of taking his food out of my mouth; he sits upon my shoulder, kisses me, pulls my hair, sings to me, and allows me to carry him abou the room without attempting to fly away. It [illegible] remarkable that though he will not allow me to cat or touch him, he suffers my child both to touch [illegible] stroke him without resistance. Much as he lik meal-worms, he is anything but particular in respe to his food; he takes whatever is given him—bla bread and cakes, potato-parings, ant-eggs, gnats, an even lucifer-matches. Once he put me in fear of hi life by eating a half-burned lucifer; but he manage though with difficulty, to swallow, and happily [illegible] digest it. His method of bathing is most comic. H is fond of taking air-baths as well as water, and [illegible] these, the movements of his whole body—his hea wings, and tail—are the same as when he is refreshin himself in water; it is as if, like a true poet, he wou bathe his whole soul in the pure element. [illegible] towards all other birds, he has formed friends solely with the titmouse. When the winter is ove the birds in cages come into my room, and onc week, have a day's holiday in the open air. If [illegible] bird, say a starling, comes through the open door into his cage, he flies off in real terror of death, with screams of agony; only when the titmouse comes, does he shew any pleasure. She greets him with her lively rattling voice, hops into his cage, pilfers his food, and then perches herself by his side. Here she keeps up a true perpetual motion; she is off and on all the wires of the cage, clambers hither and thither, slips out between the bars, and then in again at the door, as if playing at hide-and-seek.

The titmice—smaller, indeed, than robins, but more lively and active, and always shy and wild—are somewhat difficult to rear in their imprisonment. I have two of them, however, which have adapted themselves very well for a long time to their place and companions. With these, as with a tomtit, I have observed the peculiarity that, though they are generally so timid, there are certain seasons when they become ailing and tame, when they fly to me, and hop in restless agitation round me, and cast upon me a look, as if they would implore some special help. They then despise all their ordinary food. I have made several attempts to cure them with other diet, and found that sometimes they would eat only meal-worms; then, again, ant-eggs and gnats; then, despising all these, only spiders would suit them; and, as if I had now found the right remedy for their complaint, a few days on this diet seemed to restore them, and they became as wild and lively as before. I have heard it said that tits do not behave well in a room with other birds, and that they peck the heads of the little ones with their bills. I have never found such to be the case; on the contrary, they keep themselves aloof from all others; and if another bird came very near them, they fly away, startled and terrified, uttering their rattling sound, with which they express anguish as well as joy: in this way, the robin has plundered them of many a worm. Only with the goldfinches has one of them ever associated in the bird-chamber, and then only in occupying a modest backward place upon the edge of a window-frame, where sat in front the crested hybrid of a goldfinch and canary, his canary-hen, and the three goldfinches. The creatures used to sit there motionless, like so many stuffed birds; but if one of them began to sing, all joined in the chorus; if the leader ceased, all became dumb, as at the movement of a conductor's wand; if one of them flew away, the whole window-frame was empty; and after a short excursion, they all resumed their places, like school-boys after a brief interval of study.

The most beautiful of all these is the hybrid. He has the figure of a goldfinch, and the colour of the canary. Being a king among all the birds of the finch species, he plays the part of one, and wears his crown upon his head, which he has, notwithstanding all Salique law, inherited from his mother. He always claims the lion's share in everything; and none dares approach a salad-leaf or an apple till he has had his fill; unless it be the canary, with whom he has lived for nearly two years. They are really the model of a married couple; they fly together, and sit together, day and night; and unlike the women, who have generally to complain that the husband discontinues the attentions of the lover, she has rather too much of delicate devotion. Without being altogether jealous, he watches her like an Argus. Woe be to the goldfinch who comes into the presence of his mistress; and upon the tree where their nest is, none ventures to remain long; yea, if one only fly past, he chases him with angry screams, and then returns triumphant to his tree, and bowing his head to his better-half, gives her looks of love, and utters exclamations full of pride, which she answers with praise and thanks. Even in building the nest, he is quite as busy as she. Stalks of straw six times his own length, whole bales of cotton, fallen feathers, he carries thither in his beak; occasionally, also, he stalks majestically about with a long thread in his mouth, like a young apprentice-boy with his first pipe in his mouth, after shop is shut.

My tame raven, a year old, is a true marvel of cleverness, an original in cunning rogueries, a genuine wag. If one could believe in the transmigration of souls, it might be supposed that he is the metamorphosis of a street-boy, or rather, that he has a whole dozen of such stuffed under his black robe. Most remarkable is his gift of imitation, with which he can ape the speech of a naughty child, and raise such a scene down stairs and up stairs, that one might suppose two or three children were violently quarrelling. Sometimes, he bursts out into a cock-crow, then barks as a dog, or mews like a cat, or springs a rattle to frighten the birds off the corn-field. Suddenly, all is still; then a child of two years cries out 'Jacob;' a boy of ten years answers with the same word, at first in a deep tone, then five or six times up the whole scale, in ever higher tones: the cry is as if he expected an answer, and got none—always sharper, shriller, angrier. Then, again, there is stillness, and a man seems to be knocking at the door; and if one open the door, in rushes Jacob, runs a few times up and down the room, and then goes to the table. Spoons, knives, forks, dishes, meat, bread, salt, in fact, everything he can lay hold on he seizes, makes for the door, and hides his stolen goods in some hole or corner. If one gives him several pieces of bread or meat, he crams all in his throat, till it will hold no more, and then he is off to his feeding and store chamber, where he stows them all away, piece by piece, in some secret hole. Then he repeats his visits so long as there is anything to be had. If one will give him no more, but drives him off, he behaves exactly like a spoiled child, snatches the first thing he can get, upsets something else, and, in short, makes a general disturbance, attacks the dog or cat, if they are in the way, and then makes off in loud laughter at his exploit.

In the streets, he always finds amusement and companions. He plays with the children who gather round him, tears their clothes, eats their bread, attacks them when they attempt to beat him with a stick, and wrenches it away from them; if a grown-up lad comes, he prudently gets out of his way. Little children he allows to touch him, but not the big ones. Whenever he has been making his toilet at the brook, he takes a round of the village, calling out Jacob or Julu, having the whole herd of children at his back. Then he goes to the field, where he constitutes himself a sort of overseer to the labourer who is working at the plough or spade. If he be digging potatoes, he gathers them into a heap, covers them with earth, and flies off; then he comes again to see if the store is still there, or watches till a maggot or worm is thrown up, upon which he rushes devouringly, fearless of the spade. This kind of occupation sometimes employs him for hours. If a cat be making at him, he lets her come within a few paces of him; and when she is ready to make a spring, he flies off a little way, sets himself down again, and continues the teasing sport till she, wearied with the thriftless chase, gives it up. Unless he happen to be home earlier from his excursion, he never fails to present himself at the house-door by six in the evening, makes his evening-call in the parlour, and then goes to rest in the shed.

Out of the house, he is just as mischievous as within; and another human peculiarity he possesses, is his fondness for everything that glitters, especially new money. Pins and needles have a similar attractive power for him. One of our neighbours, who was a washerwoman, used to hang out her linen near our window, and pinned them to the line. Perseveringly, he used to pull out the pins, and while the woman was uttering her anathemas upon him as she picked up her fallen clothes, he would fly away into the garden, uttering a most malicious croak, and here I one day found the thief's depository under some wood, filled with needles and pins.

He lets out, however, his whole jealously wicked or wanton humour upon a small setter-dog, and in this disposition reaches the climax of the comic. If some one at dinner coaxes the dog towards a dish of bread-and-meat fragments, the animal, taught by past wrongs, first looks anxiously round, to see whether Jacob be in the mind to share it with him; but the latter pretends not to see the dish, and goes on with his toilet, or commences a few staves. Slowly and softly, the dog sneaks to the dish; but scarcely has he begun to eat in supposed security, when up comes Jacob behind him, pulls him by the tail, draws him off from the dish, and then himself falls upon the crumbs, which he carries off piece by piece, and hides them wherever he can find a hole. The dog who, in the meantime, has taken refuge under a sofa, observes attentively where he hides his booty, and as soon as Jacob's back is turned for a moment, he hastily fetches out the deposits, and eats them. When Jacob has cleared the dish, he mounts the stairs with a shout of joy, but soon comes back to see whether his hid treasures are still undiscovered. He goes regularly from one hiding-place to another, and if, after the first or second, he finds no more—while the dog, in the meanwhile hidden under the sofa, anxiously watches his movements—then he stands still a while in the middle of the room, considering where it is possible his meats have gone. Suddenly, it occurs to him who the thief is, and he sets upon the dog, who, if he have not fortunately found refuge in my arms, gets unmercifully tousled. This game they play almost every day. Last summer, the raven met with a mishap from my neighbour's brood-hen; the latter, who may have taken the raven for a bird of prey, dangerous to her chickens, chased him whenever she got sight of him, and sent him home each time badly handled.

One day I was standing in the garden, the dog and the raven being near me. While the latter was playing with some gooseberries, all on a sudden the hen rushed over the wall, and fell foul of the dog first, threw him to the ground, and was pecking him cruelly. As soon as Jacob had recovered from his first fright, he made off, shrieking terribly. This reminded the hen that she had made a mistake, and had missed her mortally hated foe: she left the dog, and pursued the fugitive, sprang upon his back, threw him to the ground, and inflicted some painful wounds on him before I could rescue him from her claws. A hawk also once fell upon him in the field, but Jacob's screams drew another raven to his aid, by which the assailant was beaten off.

Like many a good-for-nothing lad who has passed through the schools, he understands a little Latin. Aqua he can distinctly pronounce; but he unhesitatingly prefers wine for drinking, which speaks much for his higher training. One day my wife put a glass of red wine upon the table; in a moment, he was at it, let himself down quietly on his stomach, dived his beak into it, and let the precious drink, drop by drop, roll down his distended throat. When my wife, fearing he might break the glass, removed it, he crept on his stomach after it; and when she took it away altogether, he flew in her face, in a real furious attack. If three glasses be placed on the table—one of water, another of beer, and a third of wine—he leaves the first two, and confines himself to the wine; from which it may be observed that the animals are not so absolutely wedded to the provisions which nature offers as to be insensible to the comforts of the kitchen and the cellar; and if they themselves can neither cook nor distil, they can yet enjoy the products of these arts.

The curtain falls. The representations of our bird-theatre, which, in a certain sense, stands for the world, are for this time closed. It is hoped that the feathered actors will not be hissed off, if they have not sung according to the rules of art, but only according to the capacity of their beaks.

MYSTIFICATIONS.

Nearly forty years ago, great merriment was excited in this northern metropolis by certain personations performed in the highest Whig circles by a young lady, to the perfect deception of all who were not in her secret. In concert with one or two persons, she would leave a drawing-room, and return as a stranger suddenly arrived, having meanwhile assumed the dress of an old lady, and then she would act and converse for hours in her assumed character, without being recognised by a single person not previously aware of the scheme. What added to the piquancy of the performance, her old lady was what is called a *character*—full of whimsical ideas and oddities, and professedly maintaining the language and dress of a former generation. Of course, such deceptions could not be long kept up in so limited a society; yet it is remarkable how often she imposed upon persons who well knew both her and her tricks—even upon individuals who had expressed a wish to see her in some of her characters—the cleverest people being always the most easily imposed upon, and children and dogs the only detectives.

Miss Stirling Graham—for such is the lady's name—has at length been induced by her friends to print, for private circulation, a small volume containing a selection of her most distinguished 'mystifications;' and, a copy having come into our possession, we feel called upon, by a principle of benevolence towards the public, to break through the restraint which the modesty of the author has imposed, and give, at least, one example of her personations. It shall be one in which the victim was no less eminent a person than Francis Jeffrey, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review:*

'At the theatre one Saturday evening, in the year 1821, Mr Jeffrey—afterwards Lord Jeffrey—requested me to let him see my *old lady*, and on condition that we should have some one to *take in*, I promised to introduce her to him very soon. Accordingly, on the Monday, having ascertained that he was to dine at home, I set out from Lord Gillies's in a coach, accompanied by Miss Helen Carnegy of Craigo, as my daughter, and we stopped at Mr Jeffrey's door in George Street between five and six o'clock. It was a winter evening; and on the question, "Is Mr Jeffrey at home?" being answered in the affirmative, the two ladies stepped out, and were ushered into the little parlour, where he received his visitors.

'There was a blazing fire and wax-lights on the table. He had laid down his book, and seemed to be in the act of joining the ladies in the drawing-room before dinner.

'The Lady Pitlyal was announced, and he stepped forward a few paces to receive her.

'She was a sedate-looking little woman, of an inquisitive law-loving countenance; a mouth in which not a vestige of a tooth was to be seen, and a pair of old-fashioned spectacles on her nose, that rather obscured a pair of eyes that had not altogether lost their lustre, and that gave to the voice as much of the nasal sound as indicated the age of its possessor to be some years between her grand climacteric and fourscore. She was dressed in an Irish poplin of silver gray, a white Cashmere shawl, a mob cap with a band of thin muslin that fastened it below the chin, and a small black silk bonnet that shaded her eyes from any glare of light.

'Her right hand was supported by an antique gold-headed cane, and she leant with the other on the arm of her daughter.

'Miss Ogilvy might be somewhere on the wrong side of twenty; how many months or years, is of no particular importance. Her figure, of the middle-size, was robed in a dress of pale blue, and short enough in the skirt to display a very handsome pair of feet and ankles. On her head she wore a white capote; and behind a transparent curtain of pure white blond, glanced two eyes of darkest hazel, while ringlets of bright auburn harmonised with the bloom of the rose that glowed upon her cheeks. Her appearance was recherché, and would have been perfectly *ladylike* but for an attempt at style—a mistake which young ladies from the country are very apt to fall into on their first arrival in the metropolis. Mr Jeffrey bowed and handed the old lady to a comfortable *chaise longue* on one side of the fire, and sat himself down opposite to her on the other. But in his desire to accommodate the old lady, and in his anxiety to be informed of the purport of the visit, he forgot what was due to the young one, and the heiress of the ancient house of Pitlyal was left standing in the middle of the floor.

'She helped herself to a chair, however, and sat down beside her mother. She had been educated in somewhat of the severity of the old school; and during the whole of the consultation, she neither spoke nor moved a single muscle of her countenance.

"*Well*," said Mr Jeffrey, as he looked at the old lady, in expectation that she would open the subject that had procured him the honour of the visit.

"Weel," replied her ladyship, "I am come to tak a word o' the law frae you.

"My husband, the late Ogilvy of Pitlyal, among other property which he left to me, was a house and a yard at the town-end of Kirriemuir; also a kiln and a malt barn.

"The kiln and the barn were rented by a man they ca'd John Playfair, and John Playfair subset them to anither man they ca'd Willy Cruikshank, and Willy Cruikshank purchased a cargo of damaged lint—and ye widna hinder Willy to dry the lint upon the kiln—and the lint took low and kindled the cupples, and the slates flew aff, and a' the flooring was burnt to the ground, and naething left standin' but the bare wa's.

"Now, it was na insured, and I want to ken wha's to pay the damage, for John Playfair says he has naething *ado wi' it;* and Willy Cruikshank says he has naething *to do it wi';* and I am determined no to take it off their hand the way it is."

"Has it been in any of the courts?"

"Ou ay, it has been in the Shirra Court of Forfar; and Shirra Duff was a guid man, and he kent me, and would ha' gien 't in my favour, but that clattering creature Jamie L'Amy cam in, and he gave it against me."

"I have no doubt Mr L'Amy would give a very fair decision."

"It was na a fair decision when he ga'e it against me."

"That is what many people think in your circumstances."

"The minister of Blairgowrie is but a fule body, and advised me no to gae to the law."

"I think he gave you a very sensible advice."

"It was onything but that; and mind, if ye dinna gie 't in my favour, I 'll no be sair pleased."

'Mr Jeffrey smiled, and said he would not promise to do that, and then inquired if she had any papers.

"Ou ay, I have a great bundle of papers, and I 'll come back at any hour you please to appoint, and bring them wi' me."

"It will not be necessary for you to return yourself—you can send them to me."

"And wha would you recommend to me for an agent in the business?"

"That I cannot tell; it is not my province to recommend an agent."

"Then how will Robert Smith of Balharry do?"

"Very well—very good man indeed; and you may bid him send me the papers."

'Meantime her ladyship drew from her pocket a large old-fashioned leather pocket-book with silver clasps, out of which she presented him a letter directed to himself. He did not look into it, but threw it carelessly on the table. She now offered him a pinch of snuff from a massive gold box, and then selected another folded paper from the pocket-book, which she presented to him, saying: "Here is a prophecy that I would like you to look at and explain to me."

'He begged to be excused, saying: "I believe your ladyship will find me more skilled in the *law* than the *prophets*."

'She entreated him to look at it; and on glancing his eyes over it, he remarked: "That from the words *Tory* and *Whig*, it did not seem to be a very ancient prophecy."

"May be," replied her ladyship; "but it has been long in our family. I copied these lines out of a muckle book, entitled the *Prophecie of Pitlyal*, just before I came to you, in order to have your opinion on some of the obscure passages of it. And you will do me a great favour if you will read it out loud, and I will tell you what I think of it as you go on."

'Here, then, with a smile at the oddity of the request, and a mixture of impatience in his manner, he read the following lines, while she interrupted him occasionally to remark upon their meaning:

EXTRACT FROM THE PROPHECIE OF PITLYAL.

When the crown and the head shall disgrace ane anither,
And the bishops on the bench shall gae a' wrang thegither;
When Tory or Whig
Fills the judge's wig;
When the Lint o' the Miln
Shall reek on the kiln;
O'er the Light of the North,
When the Glamour breaks forth,
And its wild-fire so red
With the daylight is spread;
When woman shrinks not from the ordeal of tryal,
There is triumph and fame to the house of Pitlyal.

(The Light of the North was Mr Jeffrey—the Glamour was herself; but we must give the Lady Pitlyal's own interpretation, as she appeared unconscious of the true meaning.)

"We hae seen the crown and the head," she said, "disgrace ane anither no very lang syne, and ye may judge whether the bishops gaed right or wrang on that occasion; and the *Tory* and *Whig* may no be very ancient, and yet never be the less true. Then there is the Lint o' the Miln—we have witnessed that come to pass; but what the '*Light of the North*' can mean, and the *Glamour*, I canna mak out. The twa hindmost lines seem to me to point at Queen Caroline; and if it had pleased God to spare my son, I might have guessed he would have made a figure on her trial, and have brought 'triumph and fame to the house of Pitlyal.' I begin, however, to think that the prophecie may be fulfilled in the person of my daughter, for which reason I have brought her to Edinburgh to see and get a guid match for her."

'Here Mr Jeffrey put on a smile half serious, half quizzical, and said:

"I suppose it would not be necessary for the gentleman to change his name."

"It would be weel worth his while, sir: she has a very guid estate, and she's a very bonny lassie; and she's equally related baith to Airlie and Strathmore; and a'body in our part of the warld ca's her the 'Rosebud of Pitlyal.'"

'Mr Jeffrey smiled as his eyes met the glance of the beautiful flower that was so happily placed before him; but the Rosebud herself returned no sign of intelligence.

'A pause in the conversation now ensued, which was interrupted by her ladyship asking Mr Jeffrey to tell her where she could procure a set of *fause teeth.*

"*What?*" said he, with an expression of astonishment, while the whole frame of the young lady shook with some internal emotion.

"A set of fause teeth," she repeated, and was again echoed by the interrogation, "*What?*"

'A third time she asked the question, and in a more audible key; when he replied with a kind of suppressed laugh: "There is Mr Nasmyth, north corner of St Andrew Square, a very good dentist; and there is Mr Hutchins, corner of Hanover and George Street."

'She requested he would give her their names on a slip of paper. He rose and walked to the table, wrote down both the directions, which he folded and presented to her.

'She now rose to take leave. The bell was rung, and when the servant entered, his master desired him to see if the Lady Pitlyal's carriage was at the door.

'He returned to tell there was no carriage waiting, on which her ladyship remarked: "This comes of *fore-hand payments*—they make *hint-hand wark.* I ga'e a hackney coachman twa shillings to bring me here, and he's awa' without me."

'There was not a coach within sight, and another had to be sent for from a distant stand of coaches. It was by this time past the hour of dinner, and there seemed no hope of being rid of his visitors.

'Her ladyship said she was in no hurry, as they had had tea, and were going to the play, and hoped he would accompany them. He said he had not yet had his dinner.

"What is the play to-night?" said she.

"It is the *Heart of Mid-Lothian,* again, I believe."

'They then talked of the merits of the actors, and she took occasion to tell him that she patronised the *Edinburgh Review.*

"We read your buke, sir!"

"I am certainly very much obliged to you."

'Still no carriage was heard. Another silence ensued, until it bethought her ladyship to amuse him with the politics of the country.

"We burnt the king's effigy at Blairgowrie."

"That was bold," he replied.

"And a pair of dainty muckle horns we ga'e him."

"Not very complimentary to the queen, I should think."

'Here the coach was announced, and by the help of her daughter's arm and her gold-headed cane, she began to move, complaining loudly of a *corny tae.* She was with difficulty got into the coach. The Rosebud stepped lightly after her.

'The door was closed, and the order given to drive to Gibb's Hotel, whence they hastened with all speed to Lord Gillies's, where the party waited dinner for them, and hailed the fulfilment of the "Prophecie of Pitlyal."

'Mr Jeffrey, in the meantime, impatient for his dinner, joined the ladies in the drawing-room.

"What in the world has detained you?" said Mrs Jeffrey.

"One of the most tiresome and oddest old women I ever met with. I thought never to have got rid of her;" and beginning to relate some of the conversation that had taken place, it flashed upon him at once that he had been *taken in.*

'He ran down stairs for the letter, hoping it would throw some light upon the subject, but it was only a blank sheet of paper, containing a fee of three guineas.

'They amused themselves with the relation; but it was not until the day after that he found out from his valued friend Mrs George Russell who the ladies really were. He laughed heartily, and promised to aid them in any other scene they liked to devise, and he returned the fee with the following letter:

"*Letter from Mr Jeffrey to the Lady Pitlyal, returning the fee of three guineas.*

"DEAR MADAM—As I understand that the lawsuit about the malt-kiln is likely to be settled out of court, I must be permitted to return the fee by which you were pleased to engage my services for that interesting discussion; and hope I shall not be quoted along with the hackney coachman in proof of the danger of *fore-hand payments.* I hope the dentists have not disgraced my recommendation, and that Miss Ogilvy is likely to fulfil the prophecy, and bring glory and fame to the house of Pitlyal; though I am not a little mortified at having been allowed to see so little of that amiable young lady.

"With best wishes for the speedy cure of your corns, I have the honour to be, dear madam, your very faithful and obedient servant,

F. JEFFREY.

"92 *George Street—April* 21, 1821."'

To have imposed upon Mr Jeffrey only two nights after he had told the young lady that he would like to see her in character, was certainly a brilliant stroke. One cannot, at the same time, but admire his gentlemanly patience during the visit, and his good-humoured letter returning the fee.

Imposture or personation has doubtless its laws like everything else. Mr William Clerk, advocate, had been completely taken in with the old Lady Pitlyal at an evening-party, and spoke of nothing else for a week. At length a friend hinted that it might be Miss Stirling. That he said was impossible, 'for Miss Stirling was sitting by the old lady the whole of the evening.' There must have been a latent or unconscious impression of the actual person in his mind, all the time that the ideal was occupying it.

At the end of her 'mystifications,' Miss Stirling Graham gives a few anecdotes of persons she calls 'worthies,' and one of these strikes us as an admirable hint at a character for a novel—indeed, a person little inferior in her attributes to Jeanie Deans.

'Looking,' says our author, 'through the long vista of the present century, and far down into the past, I see myself, a little girl of five or six years old, sitting on a *creepy* at the feet of a remarkable old woman called Meg Matthew.

'Meg sat at her wheel spinning flax with both hands from the waist, while I gazed on her dear, homely, wrinkled face, drinking in the old-world tales of her past life; her dress, a short-gown, woollen petticoat, a striped wincey apron, a close white mutch with a black hood over it.

'She had been a servant in the family of the minister of Kinnel. The minister and his wife both died during her service, leaving three children, two boys and a girl, totally unprovided for. Upon which Meg engaged an attic room in the Marketgate of Arbroath, and carried the orphans there with her, where she span to maintain them, and she begged [illegible] extorted from those she thought could afford it, their schooling and clothing.

'She did not ask like a mendicant, but said [illegible] *must have* such and such things for her bairns; [illegible] when the boys were to be fitted out, she would [illegible] various places, tell the lady that she must have linen, and that the young ladies must set to wark and make so many shirts for Jamie or Willie.

'Situations were procured for the boys—one settled in the West Indies, the other in Montreal, and after the lapse of years, Willie returned in good circumstances, and died in Arbroath. James married in Montreal, became affluent, and sent his daughter home to visit her aunt, and the friends who had known Meg. She was an accomplished, ladylike young person.

'Meg went herself to London with the boys, to see them fitted out, and witness their departure; and she saw King George III., whom she described as being "like ony ither husbandman wi' a stand o' blue claes."

'Betsy obtained a lady's-maid's place in Hopetoun House, where she remained till her marriage with Mr Haldane, a stocking-manufacturer in Haddington. He left her a widow, in comfort; she was much respected, and died in a good old age.

'Meg was the theme of many conversations among the young ladies of Hopetoun and their attendant; her name and fame were even well known among the servants.

'One day a house-maid ran into the room calling out: "Miss Cruickshank, if your Meg be in the body, she is now coming up the road, dress't in her Sabbath-day claes, and her plaid ower her head."

'It was Meg herself, arrived on foot from Arbroath, and rapturously she was welcomed by the whole family. She would remain only a few days, declining all favours for herself; and when they offered to shew her through the house, replied: "Na na; I'm no gaen to big the marrow [that is, the like] of it."

'She returned home to her spinning-wheel in her solitary little room, and from her rather unsocial manners, she was looked upon by coarse-minded people, in the light of a witch, or one who was in compact with the devil.

'I remember her last illness, and seeing her laid in her coffin.

'Her dust rests within the cemetery of the old abbey of Arbroath.

Embalmed in memory with things that are holy.'

The volume contains also some specimens of poems and songs, of a degree of merit adding much to the claim which we now feel inclined to advance, that there should be an edition of *Mystifications* for the service of the public.

PORT NATAL.

A few facts concerning the colony of Port Natal, which has lately begun to attract a share of public attention as a new field of emigration, may be interesting both to intending emigrants and to readers generally. There are three things currently believed throughout this country to be detrimental to Natal—namely, the heat, the unhealthy climate, and the very inadequate supply of labour. Now, such remarks, which I have often heard made, only shew the great want of correct information which exists regarding the colony. According to government statistics, the thermometer on the coast during winter averages 72 degrees, and in summer 80 degrees; further up and above the capital (Pietermaritzburg), the climate is very much the same as in England; at D'Urban, and along the coast, the sea-breezes cool the atmosphere.

Hot winds, as in Australia, are seldom felt; so much so, that when one does come, people go about very much surprised, informing one another that it is 'actually a hot wind!' When warm in Natal, it is always dry; few and far between are those close, humid, sultry days, so much felt in India, in which men go about as if the exertion of dragging one leg after another was too much, and when the only comfortable position to be in is up to your chin in cold water; when to eat is a nuisance, and to drink is a necessity. The rains in summer are constant; scarcely a day passes without a shower, and when it rains there, *it does rain*—not as it is in Britain, an unpleasant drizzle, but an evendown-pour. So much, however, is the earth parched by winter droughts, and so great the evaporation, that no rain, however heavy, lies on the surface more than three days; and of course fever and all diseases arising from decayed vegetable matter and stagnant water are unknown. Now, in what is called the Amatonga country, about 250 miles from D'Urban, the decayed vegetable matter and stagnant swamps are so great, that it is death to any European to venture there. Miles upon miles of flat country, in fact, one great rich swamp, covered with game, is there inhabited by a people civilised in comparison to their neighbours the Zulus; but where death or disease is sure to attack any white man who enters. Great is the contrast within so short a distance! For Natal is a country without one virulent disease peculiar to itself, where consumption and scrofula are unknown, where health is, in fact, rampant, where the ladies are all in despair about getting so stout and strong, and where many have saved their lives from the grasp of those fearful diseases so prevalent in the old country.

The colony of Natal contains a population of about 10,000 whites and 225,000 blacks. Now, with this immense number, the most credulous cannot believe the assertion that labour is scarce; for, allowing one servant to every white man, woman, and child, what an immense number there remains for future emigrants! It may be said that the greater portion of the 225,000 are women and children; but it is they who, at their own homes, labour most. The women hoe, plant, and reap, carry water, cook, and, in fact, do everything except build the huts, milk the cows, and hunt. Where, also, would you get better pickers of cotton than Caffre children? Such is the increasing fondness of the Caffres for money, and the articles which it will procure, that they are fast overcoming the prejudice about letting their women and children go out to work. It is also plain that, as they begin to feel the advantages and security of being under British government, the chances of any outbreak are constantly lessening. I have heard many people say: 'Oh, but your natives are a very bad set, are they not?—always warring and plundering;' but they have been confounding the Caffre war in the Cape Colony, a place 700 miles away, with Natal. Every Caffre in Natal knows well that, were the white men gone from the colony, the surrounding nations would at once make a clean sweep, so envious have they become of their accumulations of cattle and other riches; and at the same time the Europeans are well aware that, should any of the surrounding nations attempt anything against Natal, there are Caffres enough in the colony, combined together under a European leader, to 'eat them up' altogether, as their own expression is. The fact being so, then, and the price of labour so low—ranging from 5s. to 10s. per month, according to the style of servant, and about 7s. more to feed them—there need be no fear about want of labour to carry out any kind of agriculture whatever.

Having endeavoured to explain away the prejudices, concerning the climate and scarcity of labour in Natal, the next thing to be done is to give as fair a description as my limits will permit of the general outline of the port and harbour, the country, and the articles of commerce which it produces.

Upon arriving in the outer anchorage, the immigrant is struck by the quiet beauty of the bay, one broad sheet of water stretching up into the country about six miles, with one or two islands towards the north-west side; on the left, a majestic bluff looks down upon poor ocean fretting at its feet; to the right, a low sandy point, partially covered with a peculiar creeper, and gradually rising as it recedes, dips into the level flat upon which stands the town of D'Urban; then rising again abruptly into the range of hills called the Berea; stretching up, up, step by step, wall upon wall, until it meets the grass-lands upon the top, almost as level as the sea itself. Between the aforesaid point and the bluff is the entrance to the bay, and rather outside of that the bar—the much-dreaded bar—whereon there is, at high-water and spring-tides, generally from 12 to 18 feet of water, and which, there is no doubt whatever, might be very much improved by a little more money.

The present bar would not, in Great Britain, be suffered to remain six months; and Natal is only waiting until, by the introduction of more people and more capital, she is enabled to make it a splendid harbour. A prospectus has lately been issued for a railway from the landing-place to the town, a distance of three miles, and all the shares have been taken up within the colony itself. As it is a dead-level all the way along the beach, it is not expected to cost more than L.10,000. It is very much wanted, and will pay, as all goods under the present system have to be carted up to town at a great expense.

The agricultural part of the colony is, as it were, in two divisions. On a coast-line of about 120 miles long by 20 broad, all tropical products, such as sugar, arrowroot, coffee, indigo, cotton, &c., grow with great facility. And not as in mere experimental gardening, but in such quantities as to assure the people of Natal that they will all, erelong, become staple articles of export. Last season's crop of sugar was 750 tons; arrowroot forms now a great part of the cargoes from Natal; the cultivation of indigo is being vigorously prosecuted by several wealthy planters from Java; cotton grows wild throughout the lower parts of the colony; the Natal coffee is considered equal to that of Mocha; one planter sold his crop for home-consumption at 95s. per hundredweight; oil-nuts, flax, fibrous plants of every description, and—indeed, the difficulty is to say what will *not* grow in Natal, and well too. The cocoa-nut is the only exception that I know of. Of course, in speaking of the products of a country in a commercial point of view, it is not usual to enumerate gooseberries, black currants, &c., and it must be acknowledged that in these Natal shews her weakness. But, as a compensation, she produces, in the greatest luxuriance, pine-apples, bananas, peaches, and other fruits which here are considered luxuries.

Land which eight or ten years ago was sold for 1s. per acre, now fetches 30s.; and it may be assumed that a good sugar-farm may, at the present time, be purchased at about the latter rate. Oxen—with which all ploughing is done in Natal—may be got for L.5. Ploughs, carts, &c., ought all to be brought from Great Britain, as the emigrant will find a considerable difference between Natal and English prices. How very different the style of farming there, is to this I see in travelling through England. Here, every inch of land is cultivated up to the railway; in Natal, a man in starting takes a look over 400 or 500 acres of land—sees a piece which he thinks will do; away he goes, breaks it up, ploughs it over, banks and ditches it round, and there it is. Then for another piece, half a mile away, it may be. In fact, there is so much rich land, that he is difficult to please, and he picks and chooses like an epicure.

Again, the part of the colony which is called, in colonial parlance, 'up the country'—that is, high table-lands sprinkled with forests of yellow-wood, sneeze-wood, and other woods indigenous to the colony—is best suited for sheep, cattle, and horses. Sheep have lately been introduced to a great extent, and many Dutch farmers have emigrated from the Orange River free state to Natal, preferring security under British government, to so-called independence under their own republic; and the greatest part of the *aboriginal* white inhabitants—that is, those who have been there ten or twelve years, have been giving up cattle and horses; the former of which constituted the principal merchandise of the people of Natal, before they turned their attention to sheep and sugar.

Natal is the country for the sportsman—from a blue buck of nine inches high, to an elephant of twelve feet, and through all the intermediate sizes there is game in especial abundance. In the vicinity of the settlement, it has been rather thinned off; but within 100 miles of D'Urban—the seaport town—you may in one hour fill a bag which it would take fourteen oxen to draw; and then think of the hair-breadth escapes, the running, the dodging, the getting up thorny trees, to the great detriment of your original and only pair of trousers, with a buffalo or a rhinoceros grunting at your heels!

I do not wish to give the impression that people in Natal are almost as barbarous as the natives, or without the amusements of society. Such an idea would be extremely erroneous. Let any one look at the Natal papers; let him see its advertisements of balls, pic-nics, concerts, botanical and agricultural shows, &c., and he will allow that Natal is one of the gayest little places in the world.

The society is equal to that in most towns in this country, and superior in many respects; for there you have all its amenities, courtesies, and enjoyment without its conventionalities. Even the Dutch Boers, who are, generally speaking, a heavy, respectable set of people, give their balls and parties, and attend them with the greatest zest. Though it does seem rather ridiculous, to see a sixteen-stone fellow whirling about in a waltz, with a partner as big as himself! I have gone to a Dutch party, and on entering the room, been very much surprised to find a Caffre dressed in a white shirt, standing in one corner of the room, grinding away at a barrel-organ, producing polkas and waltzes with as great an indifference as if they had been pepper or coffee, for domestic consumption. But this is an exceptionally ludicrous case.

Natal, however, is not the place for a large emigration of the poorer class to be directed to—that is, of agricultural labourers and mechanics. The field is no doubt extensive, and land plenty and fertile; but still a man must have something to keep him while his crops are growing. The number of farmers who can afford to employ white men, in the face of native labour being so cheap, is at present very small.

But every man who goes to Natal with a capital from L.100 up to L.20,000, it does not matter how much, and has anything like energy and determination, is almost sure to succeed.

A LAST KINDNESS.

The composition candles were burning as brightly as 'it is their nature to'; the slaty coal was popping red-hot out of the fireplace only at considerable intervals; and Bob Evans and myself, in the third floor of the Inner Temple, had made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances permitted. I should, however, speak for myself only when I mention comfort, and it is a misnomer to speak of my companion as 'Bob.' Mr Robert Evans, Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, was now become a wan, nay, a haggard individual; a flabby, flaccid, jaundiced-looking, mummy-like person, with shaky hands, and knees that he had next to no command over whatever; a scarecrow who had borrowed the voice of one of its feathered enemies, a withered anatomy, an unwholesome ghost—in fine, although I should weary myself in base comparisons, I should never be able to convey the true conception of that mournful thing to which my old friend Bob Evans had grown.

He was a young man too; a man like myself, in the very prime of life, which I think I am not far wrong in setting at seven-and-forty; but he looked like seventy-four. His hair, which wont to be as dark as the—no, ingenious reader, not as you were about to anticipate, 'as the raven'—as dark as the crow (for it had a gloss upon it peculiar to itself and that bird alone), was now as white as the pigeon; and as the pigeon, too, which had very recently moulted. His jaw was dropping in, in consequence of his teeth having dropped out, and his nose and chin seemed about to have a meeting, which, unlike that contemplated by the poet, would by no means make amends, as far as appearance went, for their previous separation. Bob wouldn't smoke, wouldn't talk; nay, although he was partaking of my generous hospitality, he would not so much as smile at several very capital *bons mots*. I could have borne anything else from a friend like him, but want of appreciation of that sort of thing is really difficult to stand.

'Bob,' said I, quite calmly, upon its third occurrence, and without shewing the slightest ill-temper. 'You're hideous to look at, and you're not agreeable to converse with. You used to be a warm-hearted, pleasant fellow enough, and recognised a good thing when it was said to you as well as any man. What has come over you? Ever since you got that thumping fee from old Sir Reginald's executors—— Why, how white you're getting, old fellow! you're trembling, too, in an exceedingly unpleasant manner. You did not kill the old gentleman—in an unprofessional manner, that is—did you?'

'George,' ejaculated my old friend in a solemn voice, 'if you ever cared for me—if I was ever dear to you when we were boys at school together, or when we worked in the same rooms at Trinity, or in the latter years when we were fighting together the long battle of manhood, side by side—promise me one thing; promise me, before Heaven, and by your sacred word, to do me one last kindness.'

'My dear Bob,' cried I, thoroughly melted by his manner, and perceiving him to be suffering real mental distress, 'I'll do you a hundred.'

'Ah,' replied he, sighing heavily, 'my request will seem so childish to you—as I know by fatal experience—that you will scarce think it worth while to comply with it before it is too late; and if I should tell you the reason, the hateful, unimaginable—— Oh!' exclaimed he suddenly, 'I suffocate! Air, air! Help, help! I die!'

In an instant I had got the dear fellow's neckerchief off, and had resuscitated him with a dash of cold water.

'What, in the name of all the faculty, is the matter with you?' cried I. 'Will it be safe to leave you by yourself, while I run out for a doctor?'

He waved his hand impatiently, as if to forbid this, but did not recover voice to speak for a considerable time. 'I am better now—much better,' said he, at last, 'and I will tell you the whole matter—the reason of the terrible change which you perceive in me, while I feel myself able.

'I went down, about six months ago, to Sir Reginald Cureton's, as you know, to attend him during his last illness. Alleviation was all that could be done for him; remedy, as he knew himself, there was none. It is needless to describe his disorder. Fits of agony succeeding one another after long intervals of stupor—each attack of course bringing him nearer to death's door—comprised almost all that you would understand of it. Now and then, but very rarely, the patient was vouchsafed a few hours of sensibility and respite from pain. These, however, were far from being blessings to him; memory returned with intellect, and peopled the brain of that unhappy man with ghastly company. He had lived, not only what is called a "hard" life, but a very evil one; his hand had been heavy upon God's poor, as well as closed against them; cruel as well as vicious, he—— But I am forgetting that we are his judges no longer, that he is a dead man at last—at last. [A shudder passed over my friend's frame as he spoke those words, which shook him like a leaf.] Enough to say that to watch by Sir Reginald's death-bed was a terrible task. Not that he feared for the future—since he had no belief in it—but for death itself; for the moment and the manner in which the inevitable shadow should fall upon his restless face for ever.

"Doctor," said he, upon a day when his pain had been less than usual, and his voice had almost dropped its customary peevishness, "I have something to tell you of the very last importance. You will have a large sum paid into your hands at my decease by my executors; I dare say, more bank-notes than you have ever calculated upon. [I knew Sir Reginald's pride and insolence so well, that no indelicate or ungraceful allusion from his mouth ever wounded me; it was habitual brutality rather than a desire to insult which prompted him to say such things, and besides, he was a dying man.] You may therefore," he continued, "very well do a piece of business for me which is not in the bond. Did you ever hear any story of us Curetons not lying quiet in boards?"

'In spite of the studiously light manner of his talk, I could not but see that the speaker was labouring under extreme anxiety. He was referring to a legend commonly believed among the domestics of the hall, and universally reported by the villagers, that none of his ancient race had ever rested quietly in their family vault. The coffin of the latest buried Cureton was always found *turned over*, as though by the struggles of its unhappy tenant, when the vault was reopened for the admission of his or her successor. Whether some enemy of the dead had done it to annoy the living—for the race had ever been a most unpopular one—no one could tell; but no sign of a forcible entrance could ever be discovered, and the keys were always in the possession of the head of the house.

"I have heard of the story, Sir Reginald," answered I carelessly; "but such an absurdity is scarcely worth remembrance."

"It is *true*," cried the baronet passionately—"it is as true as that you sit grinning there. When I took my brother to his last home, twenty years ago, I helped with my own hands to set his father's coffin straight; and the old man, I know, had in his time done a similar office for his predecessor. Now, mark me, I am not going to scratch and fumble in the dark until I am smothered. Will you see, therefore, that the people bury me in quicklime?"

'I had had too many patients in my time to be in the least surprised at such a request as this; and Sir Reginald was, moreover, just that description of sceptic who will grovel at the foot of a family superstition; and I of course promised to do what he desired.

"And, doctor," added he, in the dogged tone in which a man endeavours to conceal his consciousness of his own shame, "you may as well keep these keys which open the vault in your own possession; and give the undertaker fellows five pounds apiece, will you, to hold their tongues? I should not like it to be said that a Cureton—and the last of the Curetons, too—was ever afraid."

'Within a few days of this conversation, Sir Reginald died; and although there is nothing more contemptible in my own eyes than such a fancy as he had expressed, I had at once a private interview with the undertaker, and paid a ten-pound note out of my own pocket to insure the dead man's wishes being complied with. The baronetcy was extinct by his demise, but a long train of expectant connections, all unknown to me, followed his body to the tomb on the next day. I myself was sent for in the morning to a casualty case at some distance off, and was therefore unable to attend the funeral, but I returned to Cureton Hall the same afternoon. I had to transact various business matters with the executors after dinner, and retired to rest thoroughly fatigued with my day's exertions. What was that not loud sound, then, that woke me, on the instant, out of a deep sleep, and in the dead of night?—that caused me to sit upright on my bed in profuse sweat, with every hair on my head standing, as it seemed, on end, with my sense of hearing strung to the utmost, and my heart beating so loud and strong, that I was fain to press my hand upon it? A rat in the wainscot? No. There were no rats in Cureton Hall. And yet there was something close beside me, *scratching and fumbling in the dark!* Sir Reginald's dying words flashed upon me directly I heard it; and within five minutes I was making my way, half-dressed, along the eastern corridor to the room wherein I knew the undertaker was still lodged. The noise was still in my ears, and accompanied me with perfect distinctness as I walked. I pictured to myself only too faithfully what must needs be happening all that time in the vault beneath the chapel. So panic-stricken a face did I wear, that the undertaker himself, used as he was to ghastly spectacles, was terrified.

"Get up," cried I, "get up at once, you liar. Come with me to the place where you have put Sir Reginald, or I will brain you with these keys. Bring hammer and chisel, villain. That man, I tell you, you buried, was buried alive."

"Sir," said he, trembling in every limb, "what would you have me do?"

'I clutched him by the collar of his night-dress by way of answer, and had him out upon the floor in an instant. With his dressing-gown twisted round him the wrong side out, his teeth chattering with cold and terror, and holding in his unwilling hands the instruments of his profession, the unhappy wretch accompanied me to the chapel. In vain he expostulated and reasoned. I was listening to those fearful sounds which he could not hear, and which seemed to increase as we neared the consecrated building. Once he endeavoured to turn back and make his escape, but I was too quick for him, and gripped his wrist like an iron handcuff. The moon shone full upon the door of the great vault, which was without the wall, but I was long in getting the key to open it, since I did not dare to leave hold of my struggling prisoner. At last the huge leaves creaked upon their hinges, and the pale moonlight overflowed all that solemn place, touching with unearthly splendour the silver nails and plates and handles which adorned, so vainly, the narrow homes of the departed Curetons. *The scratching and fumbling in the dark* had now entirely ceased; but there was a dark something standing up at the entrance, at sight of which the guilty officer of the dead gave a scream that set many a candle glimmering in the hall-windows, and brought us speedy help. The coffin of Sir Reginald was standing before us absolutely *on end;* nor when we opened it was there found a trace of that quicklime about which the unhappy baronet had been so solicitous.

'I know full well,' continued my poor friend, 'every one of those arguments which common sense as well as medical knowledge can apply to a case like this. Pray, spare unnecessary talk upon this awful subject. All the reasoning in the world cannot save my nights from being passed in agony, my days in miserable apprehensions, with fits such as that you were witness to just now, when I seem to be, myself, in the place of my wretched patient, and *to scratch and fumble in the dark* until I suffocate. My health has quite given way under these repeated visitations; still, there will be a load taken off my mind which may do me good even now, a horror subtracted from the dread idea of death, if you will promise me one thing.'

'I promise you, dear Bob,' cried I, 'upon my sacred word.'

'Then you will do me this last kindness: before I am buried, you will decapitate me with your own hands.'

Directly my poor friend had obtained the desired assurance, his spirits seemed to rise in a very extraordinary degree. For the first time since that scene in Cureton vault, he passed the ensuing night without any sensations of a painful nature; and he is now at the sea-coast, picking up flesh, as well as sea-anemones for his vivarium. Still, it is of course quite possible that Bob may not live so long as myself, and the knowledge that I am bound in that case to perform the office of his executioner, does certainly—to an unprofessional person like myself—give an interest to our friendship not altogether of a cheerful kind.

TO THE WIND.

WITH fearful voice, he rushes down our street,
Making the signs creak horribly. At night
(When peace should reign), he mostly doth delight
Upon the window-panes strange tunes to beat;
I've lain abed and fancied restless feet
Were dancing on the staircase, sounds so wild
Created he for wonder-loving child,
In whose fresh soul fine awe and fear did meet.
His wailings oftentimes so plaintive seemed,
I gave him human passions, and felt sad
For that deep mourner who beneath the shade
Of pitying Night his soul's keen anguish named
In language suited to the troubled hour,
When bells were trembling in the crazy tower.

J. E.

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GOD'S ACRE.

VERY recently, a melancholy duty directed our steps to the great Eastern Cemetery of London; and so singular and so touching did some of the appearances connected with this vast resting-place of the people seem to us, that we are inclined to think a brief account of it may not be uninteresting to the readers of the *Journal*. The walk thither from the city parsonage at which we were staying, is through one of the meanest and poorest parts of the metropolis—one of those tremendous contrasts to the west end which strike so painfully on the heart. The approach to Kensal Green is through a city of palaces; one smells sweet odours and hears sweet sounds, till the wide country-road is gained leading to the far-away garden of the dead, where the sleepers repose amid flowers and sculptured marble till the final waking. But *here*, in the east, one traverses miserable, comfortless-looking streets of grim dwellings, hollow-eyed and gaunt-looking, like their inmates; while, outside them, children, ragged beyond all imagination, play about, or huddle together in groups. It was on a Saturday that we passed through this miserable portion of the town, and, to our astonishment, it seemed something of a gala-day, for flags were hung across the streets from house to house, and the whole contents of the small shops were literally turned into the streets, where they impeded our passage on the pavement, but were supposed to facilitate the Saturday purchases of the people. The greater portion of these commodities consisted of such trash, whether of food or clothing, that a universal clearing of it appeared the most desirable fate. Wretched old clothes—accounting for the costume of the ragged boys—lean, dry-looking pieces of meat, and, greatly preponderating in quantity, baskets of dead-looking, withered cabbages, the languid leaves of which drooped mournfully over faded radishes, and dull-looking oranges. Everybody seemed busy; but it was not with a joyous, living life; it was all alike—dull, though noisy—a wretched present, without either past or future—a scene to make us more fully comprehend the beautiful significance of the old Saxon name for a burial-place—God's Acre. And there it was at last!—the final resting-place, which human care and love have here made a pleasanter dwelling than its frontier-land of life. We entered it by handsome carved iron gates, opposite which stood the only large and well-furnished shop we had yet seen—a stone-mason's and grave-maker's; and we walked down wide paths, bordered by the graves of the dead—some few with little flowery enclosures above them, some with crosses and other sad heraldry of Christendom, but none bearing that look of brightness which at Kensal Green reconciles one to the great sleeping-place. One fact which struck us particularly was, the *immense* number of infants and very young persons buried there, as the inscriptions testified. It is a perfect Golgotha of innocents. There are at least *five* infant records to one of mature years.

At last we came to that strange feature of the place, which gave it, in our eyes, a charm beyond all the brightness and elegance, even of a Père la Chaise. We reached that portion of God's Acre which emphatically deserves the name—the spot appropriated to the poor; the resting-place of those weary and wretched ones we had just left behind. Afar off, the singular appearance of the spot struck us; nearer, it was the most touching blending of love and sorrow, with all that a high civilisation denominates ludicrous, that we had ever seen, and of the existence of which, in London, only our own eyes could have convinced us. The graves might have been graves of the Sandwich Islanders! Our thoughts flew back to Robinson Crusoe and Whittington, and the old, far-off days of London and its merchant-sailors. The maritime element of our people could not be doubted there. It was a wide, flat piece of ground, glittering with *shells!* The graves, narrow and small, were formed and bound in by a low twisted lattice-wood of boughs. They were not covered with turf—at least, not many of them—but in the earth, small white glittering shells were stuck, forming letters which told who slept below, and sometimes made a text or a homely farewell. On others, very large and handsome conch-shells bore on the tender pink of their rounded bosoms, the name, age, date of death, &c., cut in black letters into them. Some had a conch-shell at each end, and the shell inscription between them. One, an infant's grave, was carefully and lovingly decorated, and at the head, the broken playthings of the poor little one were stuck in the earth—a shattered cart, and a tiny china-plate, with a painted piece of ham on it, with which it once, perhaps, made a Barmecide's feast, during its hungry days on earth; and yet the toys gave us a hope it had not been in such sad want.

On many graves we found the little white Cupids that Italian boys carry about on their heads for sale, seated gravely, writing or reading, with sweet arch faces and little wings. They were doubtless taken for infant angels by the ignorant love which placed them there; and though they raised an involuntary smile, were, after all, no unmeet memorial. Further on, the same kind of graves were even more carefully decorated, with brighter and prettier shells, some of them rare, and even valuable, telling of the far east from whence the sailor-mourner had brought them—perhaps for this very purpose. Here the infant Cupids were exchanged for the child Samuel kneeling in prayer, but who, being black, and looking very *triste*, was scarcely so pretty as the Cupids, even if more appropriate. In the centre of one grave, fixed firmly in the earth, we found a tough old walking-stick, with a metal head, the only property, probably, of the aged man whom the shell-language again told us reposed beneath. On each side, a small rose-tree promised to support it by and by; at present, it looked strong and sturdy, and had a strange, weird-like look of defiance, as it stood erect and alone, putting us in mind of Wulfstan's crosier, fixed into the Confessor's tomb by the church-necromancy of another age. At a distance, these singular memorial-places are very disfiguring to the symmetry of the garden, and form another of those painful contrasts of which we have before spoken; but when the human feelings connected with them are taken into account, we believe London scarcely contains a more touching or suggestive spot than this portion of God's Acre at Bow.

It draws one's heart and one's best sympathies towards the living poor, who have thus 'done what they could' for those whom love follows beyond the tomb. Faith and hope for the living—for the tender-hearted, simple-minded survivors—awake beside these shell-strewn graves; for it has been well observed that one of the true indices to national character may be found in their treatment of the dead.

It was a gentle feeling that placed at first the home of the dead under the shelter of God's church; and though care for the living has now compelled us to do away with the old reverent tenderness of church-yards, we probably all sympathise more or less in the feeling which dictated Coxe's pretty lines:

Oh, bury me then in the green church-yard,
  As my old forefathers rest;
Nor lay me in cold necropolis,
  'Mid many a grave unblest.
I would sleep where the church-bells aye ring out;
  I would rise by the house of prayer,
And feel me a moment at home, on earth,
  For the Christian's home is there.

How different is the impression made by the lowly village church-yard, with its solemn yews—once the armoury of the English archer—its waving grass and moss-grown graves, or even by the shell-inscribed tombs of Bow, from that which we felt when gazing on the tower of the Parsee or the desolate mummy of Egypt.

Our visit to Bow reminded us of the somewhat singular chance which has in the course of our life brought beneath our actual observation every mode of sepulture, except only the disgusting burials of Naples and the tree-enclosed skeletons of New Holland. On the plains of Salisbury, we have looked on the tumuli of the ancient Briton and Saxon; in Egypt, on the pyramids and catacombs where poor humanity, become a statue of rigid dust, has been ruthlessly torn from the shelter of the grave to satisfy antiquarian curiosity, or to be made a drug in the apothecary's market; and in India, on the funeral pile of the Hindoo.

Next to the grave sanctity of the English country church-yard, we prefer the Mohammedan burial-grounds to all others. On the verge of the Egyptian desert, we saw a city of minarets, mosques, and towers, white, glittering, and silent, majestic in its awful repose: it was a city of the dead—a Moslem cemetery; and alike in its locality and the solemn beauty of its tombs, we recognised a just taste and a due reverence for death. It deserved the name the Afghans give to their cemeteries—'the City of the Silent.' And here we may observe, that the burial-places of the Afghans themselves—who, though of supposed Jewish descent, are Mohammedan by faith—are also remarkably pretty. They hang garlands on the tombs, and burn incense before them, believing that the ghosts of the departed hover near, and sit each at the end of his own grave, enjoying the fragrance of their offerings. A hole to admit air is always left in a Mohammedan tomb.

But if the Mohammedan burial-place ranks next to the older English, the Parsee's or Fire-worshipper's is of all the most revolting. Often have we shuddered, when driving on the island of Bombay, as the hideous vulture, heavy with gorging the dead, flitted over the carriage, and drew our thoughts and attention to the high martello-shaped tower, on the top of which an iron grating exposes the dead to the vulture and the carrion crow, till the bones are picked clean; when the grating is removed, and they fall into the deep receptacle beneath. The Parsee worship of the elements, by which fire, earth, and water are deemed too holy to come in contact with a corpse, has undoubtedly originated this repulsive mode of burial. There also we often saw burning in the still moonlight the funeral pile of the Hindoo, who believes he destroys the clog of the soul when he burns the body, and has no desire or faith in its resurrection, as the ancient Egyptian had.

There is one peculiarity attending the burial of the dead which has often struck us in our wanderings: no people, however maritime, of ancient or modern times, have ever made a burial-place of the sea. Whether the unceasing restlessness of the great deep has caused this avoidance of it as a sepulchre, or that it would have had the appearance of casting away the dead, we cannot tell; but no such national custom has ever prevailed.

Everywhere, even among savages, some spot in every land has been given to the dead, except among the Caffres, who 'threw dead bodies,' Sir Thomas Browne tells us, 'to the hyenas.' The first land ever purchased was for a tomb—that of Sarah, the mother of the Hebrew race; and of all people, perhaps the Jews are most solicitous as to their sepulture. Their name for a burial-place is worthy of the once chosen people of God—'The House of the Living;' an expression finely implying that it is the dead alone who truly live. The human body, according to their notion, has an indestructible part, called Luz, which will be the seed of its resurrection. This is a small bone, in shape like an almond, placed at the end of the vertebræ, which bone they declare can never be destroyed. For many ages a superstition also prevailed among them that the resurrection could only take place in their own land, and numberless Jewish bones were, consequently, wont to be sent to Palestine, to be interred in the holy earth. Sometimes a wealthy Jew would import earth from Jerusalem, to line his European grave. But this love for the national dust seems to be inherent in their race, as even Joseph would not leave his bones in an Egyptian grave, but took a vow of his descendants that they would carry them back with them to the beloved country, where their sole possession was a sepulchre. Both he and Jacob, however, seem to have undergone the Egyptian process of embalming, and to have been mummies rather than skeletons.

The Abayas, a Circassian tribe, have a strange way of preserving their chiefs by natural means—the embalming physicians being the bees! The dead body is placed in a wooden coffin with an opening above the face, so that it may look heavenwards; and by this hole the bees enter, as into a hollow tree, and embalm the body as it lies, by covering it with wax and honey. A sweet, simple, and most natural method of preserving and embalming the beloved.

Cremation, the old Roman fashion, fell into disuse, probably quite as much from the increased expense of fuel, when the population increased, as from the Christian doctrine of the resurrection. In India, as we have said, the custom still continues; and we have often seen long lines of glimmering funeral piles along the shore at night, which, taken for watch-fires or beacon-lights at sea, have lured many a good ship to her fate upon the low black rocks of the Indian Ocean. The smallest quantity of wood which is sufficient for one of these pyres is three hundred-weight!—a sufficient reason for their discontinuance in the west as the forests fell before the advancing habitations of man. The last Christian body burned after death was that of Henry Laurens, the first president of the American congress. He desired it by his will, and enjoined the performance of his command on his children as a duty. The reason of this wish was, that an infant of his own had been nearly buried alive, and he had, consequently, constantly dreaded such a fate for himself.

'He that hath the ashes of his friend,' says Sir Thomas Browne, 'hath an everlasting treasure;' and, assuredly, there are few who would not think it a precious privilege to retain so closely and faithfully the remains of the beloved; but of a return to the old Roman custom, we can never hope in our over-peopled world. The same cause which is closing our overstocked church-yards, and driving the dead away from the shadow of the spire and the voice of the bell, put out the Roman death-fires, and forbids them ever being rekindled; so we must even content ourselves with cemeteries as they stand at present, and be glad that they contain as touching and infallible proof of the 'heart' of the nation, as that offered by the graves of the poor at Bow.

It is one of the peculiarities attending church-yards or cemeteries, that a *new one* is always regarded with prejudice. We have somewhere read that no family would consent to inter their dead in the (then) new cemetery of St George's, Queen Square, till it had been hallowed by the burial of Nelson, the saintly author of *Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England!* Afterwards, it filled rapidly. There is also, in many of the rural parts of England, a strong prejudice against the north side of the church-yard as a burial-place, proceeding, probably, from some faint tradition of the old custom of burying great and known criminals there:

On the north of the church were buried
The dead of a hapless fame;
A cross and a wail for pity,
But never a date or name.

By the Partidas,* any place where a man was buried became 'religious' or consecrated ground; and whoever gave permission for a corpse to be interred in his land, lost his property in that portion, for, by very reason of the sacredness of death, it devolved forthwith to the church.

Much remains to be said, had we space, of the famous catacombs of old Rome, with their graves of saints, confessors, and martyrs; of the modern catacombs, where the dead sleep beneath the whirl and bustle of Parisian life; of the hideous burials of Naples; of the preserved dead of the monkish priesthood; of the chapels of human bones, &c., &c.; but they would be beyond our limits; so we must content ourselves by merely adding our hope, that English cemeteries may grow more and more like those in Coxe's *Dreamland*, with whose pretty description of an imaginary burial-place, 'most musical, most melancholy,' we shall conclude:

And Dreamland folk do love their dead,
For every mound I saw
Had flowers, and wreaths, and garlands, such
As painters love to draw!
I asked what seeds made such fair buds,
And—scarce I trust my ears—
The Dreamland folk averred, such things
Do only grow—from tears.

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* A famous code of Spanish law promulgated by Alonzo el Sabio, king of Castile, in 1260.

ALARMING PROGRESS OF BIOGRAPHY.

It is just possible, even in these days, for a man of judgment and discretion to go through life without being made a knight; he may, by finesse and unceasing vigilance, escape getting a public Testimonial of his worth or talents presented to him while in the flesh; but after death, the most prudent, no longer able to defend themselves, are liable to be given over unto the Biographers. This, as Lord Brougham observed—we have no doubt, with especial sensitiveness—adds a new terror to the Grisly King.

The worst of the matter is, that from this terrible fate no memory, however unpretending, is secure. The birdie that twitters on bough and brier is as liable to have his little tunes set to music, and published with illustrations, as that which carols loud and long at the gates of heaven. No matter how noiseless the tenor of our life, nor how sequestered its ways, it is just as likely to be made a public thoroughfare after we are departed, as though we had led the van of mankind upon the crowded highway to the Temple of Fame. We are not sure, indeed, but that the being Famous is not often the safer position of the two; for the Literary Coroners who preside over these mental *post mortems*, may then avoid us, from the idea that there are certain to be many rivals in the burial-ground, and thereby we may altogether escape.

The distress of these gentlemen, when a happy release of this kind does occur, is ludicrous in the extreme. 'Gracious goodness! we have forgotten Percy Bysshe Shelley,' was the thought that flashed upon some half-dozen of them simultaneously a few months ago, and immediately the ashes of that funereal pyre by the Italian sea were swept up and garnered, to be showered upon us by those irreverent pepper-casters anew. From the worst form of this persecution, however, the memory of poor Shelley was secure. They could not—or some of them would certainly have attempted it—construct a Religious Biography out of *those* materials. It is almost worth while to be unorthodox to procure exemption from this tremendous wrong.

Biographies of that particular kind seem to require a special description of Editor; a man who not only does not consider 'faith and prayers among the privatest of men's affairs,' but who delights in exposing whatever his victim was accustomed to hold peculiarly his own and sacred. Everything that bears beyond dispute the moral mark of *Private* upon it, is culled with particular attention, and printed either in large type or in italics. He is commonly of the same religious sect as his unfortunate Subject; and if there are any bitter and uncharitable expressions concerning a rival persuasion, to be found in the dead man's writing, they are certain to lose none of their intensity at second hand. The opinions thus posthumously expressed, are always—for what reason we do not know—denominated 'views,' while the biographies themselves are commonly termed 'memoirs.'

For this reason, we regarded the outside of the volume now before us[*] with a rather suspicious eye; and took it up as a highly intelligent raven is wont to handle a walnut, which he opines to be rotten, and is aware in any case that he shall not enjoy. We inserted our paper-knife into the preface, and found the editor apologising to the Religious Public for not having made the 'Memoir' solemn enough. We opened the first chapter, and were relieved from our apprehensions, in the following very pleasant manner:

'Some thirty years ago, an English tourist was standing on the Castle rock, with a lank, keen-visaged Scotchman for interpreter and guide.

"Now, my good friend," said the Southron, "you have talked quite enough about your native town. Pray, forget Paisley for a moment, and let us look at Edinburgh."

"It 's no that easy to forget Paisley when ye look at Embro'," replied the offended *cicerone*. "Seest 'ou?" and he pointed towards the University buildings; "that's Embro' College, where they come from England and a' pairts to learn to be doctors, and chancellors, and members o' parliament; and it has the cleverest men in the three kingdoms for its professors: but far the cleverest of them a' is ane John Wilson, and *he's* a Paisley man. And seest 'ou?" pointing to a distant spire; "yon's the steeple o' North Leith. It's the best stipend in Scotland, and at this present it's allowed to have the best preacher in Scotland for its minister. Ye must have heard tell of the Rev. James Buchanan; but ye may have forgotten that he's a Paisley man. And seest 'ou that kirk wi' the doom on't? That's St George's, where a' the gentry attend for the sake of the singing; and I'se warrant ye'll no hear the like o' the precentor in a' England. They ca' him R. A. Smith, and he's a Paisley man. And seest 'ou where a' thae coaches are waiting to start? That's the Register Office. Ye may say it's the keystane o' the kingdom; for lairds and lands a' hing by it. But though it's the place where dukes and earls keep their titles, and the king himself keeps his papers, every day, when the clerks gae hame, and the door is steekit, the entire place is left in charge of an auld wife, and she's a Paisley woman."'

The subject of this memoir was the brother of that John Wilson, the Paisley man, better known as Christopher North, and poor James suffered accordingly. Next to being the younger brother of the Head of the House, there is nothing more unpleasant than the having a great man—unless it happens to be one's self—in one's own family. Involuntary comparisons are continually suggesting themselves to other people's minds. 'Has Professor Wilson any brothers?' inquired a certain guest at a table whereat James Wilson was sitting. 'O yes,' replied he with a sigh, and before the host could interfere with an explanation; 'he has several; but, as you know always happens in such cases, they are all idiots. However, I submit to the laws of nature.'

When we had read thus far, our last lingering suspicion of the kind of biography we were here about to have, was set at rest; for if there is a foe who is such an over-match for Cant that she cannot live in the same soul with him, it is Genial Humour. Wilson, too, had another quality very inimical to her in his love for the beauties of nature, which, though exhibiting itself in a less vigorous manner than Kit North's, seems to have been quite as genuine and tender. It is, indeed, as a Naturalist, if as anything, that the memory of James Wilson claims the attention of the public at all. He was not, says Dr Hamilton, a mere collector, who prefers a bird in the hand to any number in the bush; or a mere anatomist, in whose eyes a chimpanzee, or peer of parliament, is little better than a skeleton with a ticket-of-leave—a preparation still walking about in native fur or exotic ermine. His desire was rather to possess continually at hand mementoes of the creatures which he had learned to love elsewhere. 'On the summer evenings, when escaped from the High School, or on the bright and ample holiday when Roslin or Habbie's How was the delectable mountain of his pilgrimage, and when his quiet, gentle spirit had seen the sights and heard the sounds unsurmised by noisier comrades, he was glad to carry home a keepsake from his own private carnival. The stuffed birds and rows of beetles which he began to store up in his little sanctuary at Queen Street, to Professor Jameson and the initiated few would be "specimens," to the housemaid and the irreverent many they would be "rubbish," but to the youthful compiler they were symbols and dear memorials. Among the whistling blasts of October, they brought back the days of June, and they made mid-winter balmy. That corncrake recalled a cloudless gloaming; and, caught as it was on Arthur's Seat, that Artaxerxes butterfly was still surrounded with the whole panorama from Ben Lomond to Berwick Law, whilst rosy reminiscences flitted past from bees and burnet-moths with wings now motionless.'

As in those early days, he pursued through life this study, half as an amusement, and half as a profession. The pleasantest portion of the volume is the description of his botanical rambles with Professor Graham and his pupils in their excursions to the far North, where the accommodation was often of the most primitive description, and a party of twenty would sleep in a hayloft, or in a windowless mountain shieling. On one occasion, they were accompanied by a naval officer, whose feats of snoring were prodigious. 'The first night he kept the whole party awake listening to his astounding performances. The second night he was voted into a separate room, along with a deaf old gardener, who was proof against ordinary noises. In the morning, his room-mate was asked how he had slept. "I never slept a wink. He gart the very bed dirl under him." At last it became needful to extort a solemn pledge that, by way of giving all his neighbours a chance, the gallant captain would not lay his head on the pillow till a quarter of an hour after his comrades—a pledge which he kept with gay good-humour, sitting up, stop-watch in hand, till the company had a fair start of fifteen minutes; but woe betide the luckless wretch who could not gain the arms of Morpheus before Triton sounded his trumpet!'

But the snoring must at all times have been something considerable, since we read in another place that 'Drs Graham, Greville, Wight, Green, and myself, sleep *quietly* in one room, part of us in two beds, and the rest upon the floor'—which sounds alarming indeed—but that in the next room there were a good many people, it being covered from end to end with recumbent students. Their custom was to breakfast at seven; then the various parties would radiate in all directions, each provided with life-preservers in the shape of pocket-pistols; some would return at five, some at seven, and some not till nine o'clock; but the dinner was a 'movable feast,' consisting chiefly of cold meat, and fish, and potatoes, which could be cooked at a short notice.

Somewhere near Loch Eribol—wherever that may be—the crowding-in dormitory became rather too tremendous. 'We had here only one small room for the whole party, and so, learning from [Quaker] Barry that he in the earlier part of the day had botanised up the valley, and passed a shepherd's hut, where he was told he might stay all night, we thought it advisable to divide a little, as there was literally not room for us all upon the floor. Therefore, Barry and myself, with Captain Graham and the kilted Scobie, though we had all had a hard day's work, set off in the dark towards twelve o'clock, in search of a roosting-place. After a few miles, we came to the shepherd's hut, at which we knocked, and knocked, and knocked again; but the only answer we met for long was the violent barking of a band of collies in the interior. At last, a feeble and querulous grumbling was heard, as if from under a heap of clothes. We could make nothing of it for a considerable time, and so continued our knocking at door and windows. We finally made out that the muffled murmurings were intended to warn us off—that everybody *should* be in bed by that time of night—and that we must make the best of our way back to Cashel Dhu. In vain we entreated, and expostulated, and explained; in vain did Mr John Scobie menace them with ducal wrath, alternately in Gaelic and "the English tongue;" still more in vain did the gentler Barry "thee" and "thou" through the keyhole or the broken *lozen.* "Thou didst willingly promise me a night's lodging when I passed thy dwelling in the daytime. Surely thou wouldst not refuse us the cover of thy roof, and the use of thy hay. Thou oughtest not to have promised, if thou intendedst not to fulfil. Thou hast deceived us, and now we know not what to do." I was certain from the first, from the tone of her voice, that she would not yield, and advised the party to be off, though I could not exactly advise them in what direction to turn their steps. We were about to go back to Cashel Dhu, when Mr Scobie proposed we should venture a few miles more up the valley, as he was "pretty sure" there was a hut somewhere on the other side of the river. Though angry at the caprice and selfishness of the woman who had turned us away (the man never spoke, and was supposed not to be at home, though I doubt not he was lying ensconced on the other side of his cruel rib), we were in good-humour with ourselves, and there was at least the chance of novelty in the adventure. It was now nearly one in the morning, fair, but dark.' There must certainly have been a great deal of fun in all this; and when they had presently to cross a very broad and rapid stream, it must have been still better. 'From constant fishing, Captain Graham and myself were very sure of foot upon the slippery stones, and firm of limb to withstand the downward sweeping of the torrent. But, alas! for Barry and his breadth of brim. "Friend, art thou assured of the way? This now seemeth to me rather a perilous passage. Thinkest thou we had not best return?"'

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[*] *Memoirs of the Life of James Wilson of Woodville.* By James Hamilton, D.D. Nisbet & Co.

Even Wilson had 'funked' it as he stepped in, and fancied Isabella (his wife) was pulling beseechingly at his coat-tails. His affection for this lady seems to have been very tender and beautiful. He never could enjoy himself fully for thinking of her, and when away, was always picturing some misfortune to her, in his over-anxious mind. His letters, indeed, to her and 'My dear sweet Lassie,' his daughter, are exquisite expressions of domestic love, and 'pious' in a very high and unvulgar sense of the word. His Glimpses of the Hidden Life, as Chapter IX. is called, are, on the other hand, unreal enough without being spiritual, and might be left out of the volume with advantage. They did not quench his wit, writes his biographer apologetically, nor make him burn his fishing-rod, nor banish poetry and *belles-lettres* from his library; they 'did not even hinder him from laughing or making others laugh.' Why, of course they did not. Why should they? Religion is neither Bile nor Monomania; nor are we aware that the subject of these memoirs ever lived in Morningside Asylum, or deserved to go there. The following, it seems, was his direction, according to a brother-naturalist in Paris, who prided himself upon his accurate knowledge of the English language:

'England,
Sir James Wilson,
Lover of Insects,
Woodville, Edinburgh.'

What reason, therefore, is there for such a gratuitous apology?

His reflections upon all subjects were pleasant, but rarely deep. He meets Van Amburgh's caravan in the Pass of Killiecrankie, and has to remark that he 'doubts not no other camelopard had ever been seen there from the beginning of creation, and it may be, will never be seen there again till the end of time.' Though why a camelopard should visit the Pass of Killiecrankie at the end of time, he makes no attempt to inform us.

His wit is of much the same order as his reflections—very good for social purposes, and doubtless heightened by a kindly charm of manner, but by no means of a sufficient body to bear bottling and retailing to the public at large.

An invalid having informed him that, as her room was under a chapel, and she was unable to move, she had had a gutta-percha pipe carried through the ceiling to the pulpit, by which means she heard perfectly, James Wilson did not approve of this; which he gravely stigmatised as 'a kind of trawling for sermons.' A Peace apostle, upon the occasion of some difficulties with the French in the matter of the Newfoundland fisheries, having expressed his horror at 'the idea of going to war for some cod-fish,' was overwhelmed by Wilson's coolness:

'Yes, sir, that's true; but then ye see they're such vurra *fine* cod-fish.'

But none of this, all very pleasant as it is, prevents the question arising in our minds of, 'Why are these things *published?* Why have we this biography of an inoffensive and agreeable gentleman, who had considerable attainments in natural history?' To those who knew Mr Wilson, it will doubtless be an interesting volume, but with that end, it should have been printed for private circulation. Because a man has written for the magazines, or even for the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* he does not become, of necessity, a public character.

Where is this sort of thing to stop, and who will be safe? Safety, indeed, has become out of the question for anybody. To escape, now means to only have a tract or magazine article devoted to one's memory; while to go scot-free, apparently, signifies to fill four hundred pages octavo, but to be mercifully spared a second volume.

A VIOLINIST'S TALE.

Several years ago, circumstances connected with my art led me to Naples. After working hard, and winning some sort of reputation as a violinist in my own country, I determined on giving a series of concerts in the principal cities of the continent, in the hope—I think not an unlaudable one—of upholding English music, and at the same time filling my own pocket. The experiment proved highly satisfactory; and with the exception of a few hostile criticisms, I must honestly confess I met with quite as much success as I deserved. At Naples, the appointment of solo-player at the Opera was offered me, and although the emolument attached to the office was not very high, I gladly accepted it, in order to enjoy the delights of a southern winter, and at the same time devote myself to theoretical studies under the genial influence of the siren Parthenope. We fiddlers require, every now and then, a few months' pause and abstraction from the too mercenary professional life of Paris and London, otherwise our enthusiasm is apt to cool, and we come to look upon our once-loved art as no longer a mistress to be worshipped, but a trade to make money by. The appointment gave me occupation, but at the same time left abundant leisure to prosecute my other studies, and I was perfectly contented with my lot. The climate and scenery are alone an intoxication, whilst the magnificent Toledo, with its perpetual fair, the stately palaces of the Chiaja, or, better still, the unrivalled bay, prohibit all ennui. To live, simply to live in this 'piece of heaven fallen on the earth,' as the Neapolitan calls his country, is a positive pleasure; and as the eye rests upon the luxuriant garden around, or catches the sparkling foam of that delicious sea, with Capri and Ischia in the distance, we no longer wonder at the indolent pleasure-seeking nature of the people. Like a gentle opiate, lulling the sense of bodily pain, a divine repose steals over the fretted nerve and heated brain in this 'delicious land of lavish lights and floating shade;' and to the musician, living for the most part a highly artificial life, amidst the feverish excitements of perpetual emulation, the lotus gift comes with a double welcome. Yielding entirely to the surrounding influences, I shunned society as much as possible, and lived alone—alone with my loved Guernarius, best and most cherished of friends. In solitary rambles through the picturesque streets, an occasional sail to one of the small islands of Lazaretto and Nisida, or a stroll to the environs, the weeks passed by in delightful succession, literally embarrassed with the riches of nature and art. Nursed in solitude, my ideas grew apace; sheet after sheet of paper became crowded with a series of hieroglyphics, unintelligible to any but a very practised eye; and I had already planned, and even partly executed, a work of a more ambitious character than any I had hitherto attempted. This work, on which I intended to rest my reputation as a composer, now absorbed my whole attention, and in order to avoid every possible distraction, I raised my fees to such an amount as would leave me undisturbed by concert-givers. The pay of my appointment amply covered my expenses, and for a few months, at least, I resolved to live in retirement. To announce publicly that I declined to accept any engagements, would have been an insult to those who had so kindly welcomed me; besides, I was 'only a fiddler,' and had to live by my art, and was, moreover, satisfied with my condition. My only object was to gain a short respite from the excitement of solo-playing, and to give my fingers a holiday, not for a moment to abandon a profession which I had chosen in opposition to the counsels of my best friends, but which, with all its drawbacks, is the only one that would ever have satisfied the aspirations of my heart. The ruse answered perfectly, for in a land where instrumental performers are proverbially ill paid, ten louis appeared an exorbitant honorarium. So I lived in peace, fulfilling my allotted task, occasionally giving my services gratuitously, when the object was one of charity, but otherwise eschewing public life. A quartett of Beethoven's or Mendelssohn's was the only temptation to which I yielded; and these glorious works never revealed their wondrous wealth of harmony to my ears so fully as when performed in my 'parlour near the sky' overlooking the azure sea.

One morning, towards the end of March, as I was sitting alone smoking, and correcting the score of my new work, the door suddenly opened, and a foreign-looking footman entered the room with a note from his master, Prince Paul ——, a Russian nobleman, then living in Naples. To my infinite surprise, the note contained a request that I would spend the following evening at his palazzo, and bring some music. Of course, there could be no objection on my part to accept the engagement, and I therefore presented myself at the appointed time and place, with my fiddle-case under my arm.

The palazzo was one of those noble mansions situated on the Chiaja; and I was ushered by the chamberlain through a magnificent hall into an elegantly furnished anteroom, where tea, coffee, &c., were liberally supplied. After duly disposing of my burden on one of the ottomans, I accepted a cup of the fragrant souchong, sank into a comfortable arm-chair, and began to make a survey of the apartment. Two or three servants dressed in black performed the duties of the tea-table to admiration, and the chamberlain was the very perfection of one of those now nearly obsolete functionaries. But what struck me as strange was, that I should be the only guest, and that no sounds of footsteps or voices should be heard. At length, growing impatient of the delay, I asked my cicerone for an explanation of this apparent anomaly; but the only reply I got was to the effect that monseigneur would wish to see me immediately; so I took up my instrument, tuned the strings, and then quietly awaited the momentous summons. Presently, the door was thrown open, and I was informed that the prince was ready; so I rose and followed my serious guide through a suite of apartments to the saloon where the great man and his friends were assembled. On my entrance, he advanced and welcomed me in tones of the most bland politeness; then, after a few commonplaces, he said he should be delighted to hear me play. I bowed, and commenced a piece of my own composition, founded on a popular Neapolitan fisherman's song. I had purposely selected this for what dramatists call *le lever du rideau*, from the fact of its possessing a certain degree of sprightliness calculated to arrest the listener's ear, and thus produce a favourable reception for my more elaborate performance. It also gave me time to study my audience and the acoustic qualities of the room, which was of considerable size, but so dimly lighted, that its proportions were not easily definable. A few wax-candles, burning in silver stands, interspersed up and down, shed so feeble an illumination on the surrounding objects, that it served but to increase the gloom.

The company consisted of some twenty or thirty individuals, who preserved the most icy frigidity of manner. One lady, dressed in blue satin, with a jasmine flower in her hair, was beautiful as a Grecian statue, but, alas! as cold. Another of the guests seemed plunged in deep thought, for his head never once moved from its recumbent position during my performance. Two or three of the gentlemen were dressed in uniform, and, to judge from the stars and ribbons which adorned their breasts, must have been men of considerable distinction. Amongst the gentle sex I remarked a few very pretty girls clustered together in one corner, whilst an elderly lady, in black velvet and ostrich plumes, seated near them, surveyed the group with a smile of benevolent approval. One couple, consisting of an old gentleman and lady, who, to judge by their silver locks and venerable forms, must have long passed the term of life allotted by the Psalmist, sat in close proximity to their host, and were evidently the patriarchs of the party. The rest I could not see, with the exception of a dark-complexioned man of about thirty-five, who fixed upon me a steady glassy eye. There was a wild, haggard expression about that man's face, that I did not like; and whenever I looked in his direction, I met the same fixed stare, until it became an insult; but as if to make amends for this, a comely-looking dame, seated by his side, rewarded my exertions with a very kindly, good-humoured smile.

There was an air of *bienséance* pervading the assembly; but, at the same time, I had never in my whole experience found the Horatian axiom of *nil admirari* pushed to the same extent; and when I brought my solo to a close, not a single expression of satisfaction greeted my labours. I ought, by the way, to except the prince, who was pleased to express himself in flattering terms of my artistic endowments. Two footmen now brought on silver trays a slight refection, composed of ices, orgeat, and Venetian confectionary. Whilst this part of the ceremony was being enacted, and I was duly refreshing myself with an ice, such as Italy alone can produce, Prince Paul came up, and began to chat about the rival schools of music in Germany and Italy in a way that shewed considerable knowledge of the subject. There was in the old gentleman's manner a benevolence and regard to the feelings of others, combined with a genial warmth of expression, strangely opposed to the chilling indifference displayed by his guests.

After a sufficient pause, I resumed my instrument, and this time selected Prume's delicious *pastorale*, *La Mélancolie*, thinking that this might perhaps be more in harmony with the feelings of my audience. But it was all one; not an emotion was stirred by the most touching tones of that expressive melody, or the admirable variations which succeed it. The dark eyes still glared at me wildly—the comely dowager smiled good-humouredly as before—the generals evinced no symptoms of a surrender of their stoicism—the group of fair girls, with their *chaperonne*, preserved the utmost composure—and *she* with the divine face and the jasmine flower! no trace, not even the faintest gleam of susceptibility dwelt on that adorable countenance. I could have borne all but this. Had one smile of approbation from those lovely lips rewarded my endeavours, I should have been content. But this indifference was dreadful. Was it possible that a being so thoroughly beautiful could be deprived of all sensibility to the poetry of sound? It could not be. No; I had failed in calling forth those emotions of the soul so obedient to the summons of the inspired musician. My wand was evidently impotent, and I became piqued and discontented. At length, after playing a mournful sweeping movement towards the close, without the slightest effect, I suddenly broke off, and in a fit of desperation dashed into the *Carnaval de Vénise*. It was a last resource, and I resolutely determined on rousing this apathetic assemblage, at the sacrifice even of my own reputation. The most *outré* and extravagant variations—the most ludicrous sounds I could devise—altercations between the old man and woman, followed by the tumbling down stairs of the former, whilst hotly pursued by his better-half; Paganini's most grotesque movements, rendered grotesquer and absurder still—followed by the clucking of hens, crowing of cocks, the bleating of lambs, the grunting of pigs—the various sounds of a farm-yard, delightfully interspersed with the mewing of cats, and the lowing of an old cow, being the veritable song of which that ancient female died: all these, and more, were recklessly thrown in without the slightest regard to anything but the desired object of rousing my audience. Caring for nothing else, I fixed my eyes on the Madonna-like head, and watched intently her face. With the electric thread which seems to connect the musician and his listener, I was ready to catch the faintest expression of her features, to seize the slightest and most airy fancy of her brain, and transfer it to my strings. Alas, alas! all was fruitless; and after some of the maddest and most insane sounds ever emitted from a fiddle, I sank thoroughly exhausted into a spacious arm-chair, and buried my face in my hands.

The prince now approached and thanked me warmly for my services, at the same time expressing the gratification I had afforded him by what he was pleased to term my wonderful execution and originality of genius. There was a dignity and grand-seignior air about the old nobleman which prevented my laughing bitterly at this dubious compliment to my charlatanry; but I saw at a glance that he meant no insult, and therefore contented myself with a formal bow. Soon afterwards, the chamberlain entered the salon; monseigneur politely wished me good-night, and my guide conducted me through the long suite of dimly lighted apartments to the hall. Just as I was leaving, I cast a glance behind: the divine head was pensive as ever—the dark eyes still glared—the good-natured dowager smiled—the warriors preserved their usual taciturnity, and the group of girls still lingered in the same corner. I felt I had produced no impression—that I had, moreover, made a fool of myself, and that the sooner I left the place, the better. Stung to the quick with mortification, I pushed brusquely past the attendants, and declining the proffered carriage, rushed into the street, glad to escape from this mansion of the dead.

The following morning I received a complimentary note, containing a cheque for ten louis, and expressing a wish to see me again in the course of the ensuing week. Now, as I said before, I am 'only a fiddler,' and have to live by my art; consequently, I again accepted the invitation, and drew out a programme of strictly classical music, thinking that my previous selection had probably not been to the taste of the listeners. I should not omit to mention that I was on each occasion provided with a *pianiste accompagnateur.*

The same stillness pervaded the mansion as before, the same ceremony, the same dimly lighted apartments, and, so far as I could perceive, the same guests. I played with care, for the idea had seized my mind that these silent persons were fastidious critics of music, and had probably not relished my extravagances of last week. I was therefore doubly scrupulous, and rendered with the utmost accuracy in my power Mendelssohn's magnificent concerto, which was my *pièce de résistance.* But I again had the mortification of closing without a murmur of that sweet music of applause which is to the executive artist as the breath of life. The exquisite beauty of the lady with the jasmine flower, faintly seen through the prevailing gloom, the soft pensiveness of that countenance, in whose features were blended Athenian grace with the Madonna inspiration, stole into my heart, and disturbed its usual placidity; for recollect, oh! reader, that I was in the land of Romeo and Juliet. As usual, the prince congratulated me on my performance, and the chamberlain conducted me to the door. The ten louis were duly forwarded, and I endeavoured to dismiss the subject from my mind; but in dreams there would arise the figure of a beautiful lady beckoning me to celestial bowers, and in the daytime my mind was haunted by her image. I became restless and moody; found myself, without what lawyers call any *malice prepense,* walking up and down in front of the palazzo, gazing at the windows, in the hope of catching a glimpse of the divine occupant. In fact, I began to evince all the symptoms of a man hopelessly and irretrievably in love. Laugh not, good friends, at my plight, for it was a sorry one. You who are rich and well born, can afford to love; the fair and the young smilingly strew the path to the citadel of their hearts with rose-leaves. And you, again, respected Jones, who don't exactly belong to the *crême de la crême,* can yet afford to love, and rear up a brood of sturdy little Joneses; but the poor artist, who is neither rich, nor high born, nor respectable—the Bohemian of society, the diverting vagabond, whose only mission is to mitigate the ennui of listless lords and ladies—what business has he to love, save some rouged and spangled beauty of his own gipsy clan! It is true, he is admitted into the familiarity of the great; he is lionised, and, it may be, flattered, by beautiful women; often, too, he is the recipient of the most delicate confidences; yet woe betide him should he for a moment forget his exact position, and lift his eyes to the fair forms around him with any other than the coldest and most deferential gaze. Yet it is hard to do this at all times—hard, with your susceptible, nervous organisation, to case your heart in steel, and successfully resist the blandishments of beauty and refinement. I was fully aware of all this, and that my growing passion was the direst insanity; everything—my position in life—the utter indifference displayed by the object of all this delirium—went to prove the fact. Still the impossibility, the coldness, the mystery only served to add fuel to my raging love, and I was living in a sort of fever. For a time I did nothing but draw figures of melancholy ladies with flowers in their hair, write doggerel sonnets to Beatrice—I had ascertained her name—wherein the moon, and the stars, and the sea largely figured, and the word love generally rhymed to grove. During the height of this madness, I arose one night from my sleepless couch, stifled and restless; I threw open the window; the gentle breeze from the sea, bearing on its wings the voices of fishermen in the bay, mingled with the occasional laughter of a group of lazzaroni, listening to the recital of some drollery; the drowsy hum of the sleeping city, and the murmur of the waves, added to the picturesque sounds which in Naples never cease day or night—all tended to compose my mind. I drew on my dressing-gown and slippers, lighted my meerschaum, and sat by the window, inhaling rich draughts of the cool and grateful air.

Presently, I seized pen and paper, and began to write. The confused ideas and passionate ravings of my heart now found a vent, and poured themselves forth in musical forms. Without premeditation or design, my composition took a shape, into which I more happily threw those wild aspirations which, through ignorance of the medium, had been simply ridiculous abortions on the uncouth canvas and doggerel verse. So thoroughly became I absorbed in my occupation, that I was bewildered when Giulia, the pretty serving-maid, gently tapped at my door to announce the arrival of my matutinal roll and coffee. I looked around; the lamp still feebly flickered against the now almost brilliant sunlight; a mass of paper lay scattered on the floor, and the ashes of the pipe had fallen on my tattered *robe de chambre*, and curiously perforated that venerable garment. I hastily gathered the manuscript together, extinguished the lamp, admitted the astonished Giulia, discussed my breakfast, and then resumed my work. By noon, it was finished, and finished to my satisfaction; I entitled it *A Dream of Love.* The same evening I was again engaged at the palazzo, and went this time triumphantly armed with my new composition, which I had dedicated to 'The Unknown Lady.' She was, as usual, just visible through the perpetual twilight which reigned in this abode, with the same placid expression of goodness in her divinely beautiful face. The swarthy stranger was also there, and his eyes rested on me as wildly as ever; the good-humoured dowager was good-humoured still; the girls, fair as a group of sea-nymphs, appeared, like those wayward beings, devoid of human souls, for they were utterly unimpressionable. The other ladies and gentlemen maintained their usual frigid demeanour. I played a romance of Beethoven's; Ernst's *Elégie*, then just published; a selection of the *Sieder ohne Worten;* and then my own *Dream of Love.* Up to this time, I had evidently made no way: my audience was unmoved, and I began to feel nervous, for I had staked all my hopes on the success of this last composition. At length I commenced, and gazing on the being of my idolatry, drank inspiration from that queenly brow. The tender strain proceeded coy and gentle as a bashful lover's vows; then gradually warming instinctively, it became hurried, uncertain, fierce, and strong, until, reaching the climax of frenzy, its passion exploded in a wild burst, and then, in broken sobs, and scarcely articulate sighs, it slowly died away in silence.

I fixed my straining eyeballs on the unknown lady, and sought to dive into the secret recesses of her soul. With a throbbing heart and fevered brow, I threw into the music all the fire which tormented my breast. The violin was no longer a mere musical instrument, but rather a human soul pouring forth the wailing melodies of 'some divine despair,' whose piteous accents must touch the coldest heart. Alas! it touched not hers. The dark eyes glared fiercely; the dowager relaxed not a muscle of that stereotyped smile: that detested smile nearly drove me mad. The maidens were passive as usual; and the heroes sat stolid as blocks of stone. I felt my head turning, and in a paroxysm of agony at the ruin of all my hopes, I flung aside my instrument, and, utterly reckless of consequences, threw myself at the feet of the lady, and wildly seized her arm, when—O that the earth had opened to receive me, and hide my shame!—the exquisite member crumbled into dust, and she, the madly worshipped queen of my soul, toppled over from her seat, and with a fearful crash, fell to the ground, dashed into a hundred fragments. . . . . . I recollect nothing further of what occurred; but when I regained my senses, I was at home, attended by a careful nurse and the ever-watchful Giulia. For some days, I was not allowed to allude to any subject of an exciting nature; but when my constitution had finally triumphed, and I was one evening sitting on the balcony, still weak, but rapidly recovering, the honest girl put a letter into my hand, which she had orders to deliver to me as soon as the physician would allow. I broke the seal, and read as follows:

'SIR—Your rash conduct has been cruelly punished, and I feel it has now become my duty to remove the mystery which has so painfully affected you. I am an old man, and have survived most of my contemporaries; consequently, I live chiefly in the past, amidst departed friends and bygone memories. For years, I have existed in this manner, alone, and yet surrounded by the dear familiar faces of those I loved best on earth. As each cherished friend died, I called into requisition the skill of the modeller, and in wax, clothed in their usual dress, wearing their usual expression, I have thus preserved my household gods around me. Remembering their various tastes, I procure those amusements to which they were most addicted, and for this purpose, I secured your ability. In these scenes, I live again, and the pleasures of memory crowd my brain. In fact, I have few other sources of joy left than those which lie embalmed in the past. Those figures you saw in the dim light are the exact—exact, yet, alas, how different representations of my departed friends and relatives; and the lady dressed in blue satin was my only daughter—good and pure as an angel. Ah! the wound is reopened. Adieu for ever. PRINCE PAUL ——.'

Enclosed was a cheque for fifty louis, and a ring, containing a lock of raven hair, set in diamonds. At first, I was furious. I resolved to return, with bitter reproaches, these hated *cadeaux;* but the prince was gone, no one knew whither. Thus baffled, I tore up into a thousand shreds my notturno, drawings, sonnets, &c. I was covered with confusion and shame. To have thus madly loved a wax-figure! All Naples would be pelting with ridicule the luckless foreign fiddler. I must instantly leave the accursed place, and once more plunge into the active scenes of daily life. Fortunately, however, I found my adventure was not known; so I quietly resigned my appointment, and bade farewell to Naples—a city I have never revisited.

Many years had elapsed, and in the varied scenes of a busy professional life, the above circumstances had nearly faded away from my memory, when, to my astonishment, one morning, not long ago, I received a small parcel from abroad, containing the miniature portrait of a beautiful girl, exquisitely painted. A letter accompanied this gift, wherein I was officially informed, that by the will of the late Prince Paul ——, recently deceased, at an advanced age, in Moscow, I became entitled to this portrait, together with some manuscript music, and a small sum of money. The music I found to be no other than a copy of my forgotten *Dream*, which had been left in the palazzo on the night of that dire confusion. Lost in amazement, I gazed at the well-remembered features until my mind dreamily wandered back through the long years to the sombre mansion, the eccentric old nobleman, the silent party, and my astounding *affaire du cœur* on the Chiaja.

NO MORE LOST ARMIES.

As a general rule, all well-meaning attempts to popularise instruction, to the extent of really making it entertaining and attractive to the undiligent Public, are failures. 'It may be port wine, since you say so,' observes the Universal Bad Boy, with a shudder; 'but it looks to *me* uncommonly like the old black dose!' Like Mr Dick Swiveller's *Marchioness*, he has 'to make-believe' very much indeed before he detects any smack of that boasted vintage, and a very little of the mixture is usually found to go a great way with him.

If we had been asked what topic it would be utterly hopeless to render palatable to any one save working M.P.s and the editor of the *Economist*, we should have replied—'A statistical Blue Book;' if we had been further urged to put it still more completely out of temptation to all but monomaniacs, we should have added, 'upon the sanitary mismanagement of the Army.' Genius and Patriotism have, however, combined in the present volume * to present us with a most interesting and yet faithful picture of even this subject.

Over and above the Reports of the various Commissions instituted by the Government, Miss Martineau seems to have had peculiar facilities for making herself acquainted with the facts of the case, and it would certainly not have been easy to have found any one to exhibit such materials to greater advantage. If there is nothing extenuated, there is nothing set down in malice; nor is there, from beginning to end of the volume, one single personal censure. With the best knowledge afforded to her by the best informed, she has also the assurance of willingness to join in the work of Army Sanitary Reform from high quarters; for it is not *there* that the hitch seems to lie, though it does assuredly lie somewhere. 'A reform here and there has been granted and effected; but the complete organisation by which the life and health of the army are to be preserved is not instituted; and we have no apparent security that it will be. Something must be done to rouse and apply the necessary stimulus; and the most obvious resource is to extend the knowledge of the case among that public from which all great reforms proceed.' It is to this end that the book has been written.

The first chapter is historical, and treats of Lost Armies generally, whom the pestilence and not the arrow has consumed—of Walcheren, the Peninsula, and the first and second Burman campaigns—but we soon come to the more recent misfortunes of the Crimea, and our immediate needs at home.

The conditions of health of the agricultural labourer, before and after his enlistment, are thus graphically contrasted:

'Bob had always lived in the same cottage. It was a tidy place when his parents married; but now it is a mere hovel. Those brick cottages are almost worse than the clay tenements of other counties for standing weather. Mossy in one place, and black in another, the walls shew signs of crumbling in a quarter of a century, instead of standing for a thousand years, like the dwellings of a mountain region. The wet comes in at corners, and the thatch is rotten in places. The bit of window up stairs will not open; but that does not matter, as it is broken, and never mended. It is stopped up with anything that comes to hand; for a man who gets only eight shillings a week cannot employ the glazier. Bob has always slept at the top of the stair, in a nice current of air from the chimney below and the broken window above. During the day he has always been abroad in the fields, except when the weather would allow nothing to be done there; and fresh air, bread, bacon, and potatoes have made a stout man of him, though rather round in the shoulders and wabbling in his gait. He has generally carried a pound of good mud on each foot, and never had any nice fancies about the dung-heap, three yards from the door. His ruddy face smiled through all the grime; and as his mother said, he "throve in the dirt." There was a grand prospect before him when he quitted the old home, the mother admitted.

'It is true he never thought to live in such a place as the barrack-rooms. He never had such bedding before, nor had seen such, except in the great shop. He had never had beef for dinner every day; and certainly he never before kept his person so clean, nor wore anything like such clothes. Yet his health is not what it always was before. He is perpetually having colds. His coughs return whenever the weather changes. His sleep is disturbed; and he feels ready to hang himself in the morning till the fresh air revives his spirits. He wearies of his meals; he wearies of his drill, and of all his business; he wearies of his very life. When he dreams of the lark in the meadow, he thinks he should like to desert, if he had the spirit; but he knows his lot is cast, and he pines on till some change is appointed him. His chest was expanded at first by the drill; and his walk is soldierly—he even thinks he is grown—but still he is not the man he was. His health is, in fact, undermined. His clothes are not as good as they are fine. The cloth sucks up wet like a sponge, and thickens and shrinks with it—having been before like a fine sieve, letting in the cold as easily. His boots burst out before he has worn them a week. He used not to mind the rawest wind on the common; but now he feels the cold whenever he turns out of the warm guard-room into the night-air; and if he comes in wet, he must sleep in his damp clothes in a place close with the breath of many comrades; hence his cough. The first person who enters in the morning says the smell is enough to knock one down. Heavy and headachy, he must rise and make his bed, and prepare his personal matters, and breakfast at seven. Then there is drill, or guard, as may be; not nearly enough to fill up his day or his thoughts. He is never alone to think in peace; nor can he work with his hands to relieve his dulness. He goes perhaps to new quarters in one place or another, and back again; but there is no prospect of war, or any more enlivening service. If, in addition to these things, he takes a disgust to boiled beef, and if the water is bad to drink, and there are foul smells about from worse causes than the dung-heap at home, it is no wonder that he goes into hospital from time to time. In fact, his comrades die off fast—more than twice as fast as policemen, and nearly three times as fast as the neighbours at home; and it may be expected that poor Bob will perish in consumption, unless he is carried off first by one of those sweeps which fever and cholera make in barracks and other places where the people have not each their portion of fresh air and pure water. It is really true that foot-soldiers in barracks at home have died at the rate of above twenty per thousand in a year, while men of the same age, of various ordinary occupations, and in a healthy situation, have died at the rate of only seven in a thousand.'

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* *England and her Soldiers.* By Harriet Martineau. Smith, Elder, & Co.

Miss Martineau is careful to tell us that this state of things is going and almost gone: 'we have a camp full of healthy troops at Aldershott, in spite of some unfavourable conditions, which would have done deadly mischief among them ten years ago;' but its departure has been exceedingly recent, and has been always resolutely obstructed by the same class of persons, who now, with fore-feet firm planted, are opposing other sanitary reforms, at least as necessary, for the sick and wounded in the field. Long before now, there seem to have been some persons in high office who would have done great good in these matters, had they been permitted by 'the System.' At the beginning of 1854, before the troops embarked for the Russian war, there were three commissioners sent out to explore the localities in which the army was likely to be encamped.

No. 1 reported of the country south and west of Adrianople, from Constantinople to the furthest probable western limit; No. 2 traversed the Danubian provinces from Vienna downward, and inquired into the diseases of the Principalities and Turkey; and No. 3 examined the country lying on the way from Constantinople to the Balkan and the north. These were specimens of the sanitary corps which Miss Martineau insists should be attached, independent of the Medical Staff, to every army. Whether these performed their duties satisfactorily or not, we do not know. The practical result of their expedition was *nil;* nothing was ever even heard of their reports. 'The explorers held no place, in fact, and were pushed aside for want of it. "The System" was not made for their admission; and the soldiers took their chance of wet lodging, bad water, and no hospital to go to beyond their Regimental one, which could not be expanded to meet any extensive need.'

So early as the 6th of June, in the beginning of the Russian war, the Deputy-Inspector General of Hospitals, writing from Varna for mattresses and various comforts for two hundred men who had 'literally nothing,' and complaining of such an absolute want of medicines, equipments, and comforts as would make dreadful the condition of the sick if the army should have to move, is informed that his letter is 'disagreeable,' and recommended to keep his recommendations to himself. Meanwhile, the cholera appears: the disease spreads rapidly; two or three urgent letters per day are despatched for medicines that do not come; 'opium and brandy, for Heaven's sake, at all events; a horse-araba (horse and cart) could bring *them;*' even an orderly dragoon, it is urged, could bring back something to save *some* lives. The replies to which, 'while men were dying by hundreds for want of a spoonful of medicine each,' are, that the amount of medicine required does not authorise the hire of a cart, and that they, the applicants, are making 'a too lavish use of arrow-root.' Similarly, when at the general hospital at Scutari, in January 1855, six dead dogs lay just under one ward window, and a dead horse 'for some weeks in the aqueduct;' when its floors were rotting with dirt; when the walls and ceiling gave out pestilence from animal matter, and the filth, vermin, and rats, under the wooden divans, on which the men lay, were of themselves a poison; we find that *in February* the state of the sewers and pipes are being made 'a subject for consideration.' Was there no responsible person to have his nose rubbed in the worst of these abominations? Was there no supervising Board, whose wooden heads could all have been knocked together violently for these enormities? And this was the condition of the General Hospital, when there had been several months' grace for getting it into order. 'If any due conception,' says Miss Martineau, 'of a General Hospital had been entertained, there would have been not only a removal of all existing filth, but arrangements for rendering harmless, and carrying away, all the refuse from an abode containing 2000 persons. There would have been a provision of pure water, accessible wherever it was wanted in the building, and security against all pollution of it.'

But to return to Varna: what wretchedness were the troops there enduring, even before the miseries of war began! Fatigue-parties were busy burying the dead. 'The troops growing idle and despondent, did not know nor care where they should go next—would certainly die if they remained there—heard things were just as bad on board the fleet—had not expected to be sacrificed wholesale without seeing the enemy.' There the dwindling regiments sat watching the spread of the grave-yards and the passage of the funerals, all day long. The best of our soldiers had sunk to being obliged to divide a march of ten miles between two days. The strongest staggered under their knapsacks.

'When we, at home, canvassed that autumn the policy of the Crimean expedition, we little dreamed that such a consideration was involved as the very existence of our army in the east. But so it was.

'The migration to the Crimea saved our force; and was only just in time. The men were so weak that they could scarcely carry their own weight. Hence the loss of their kits, and of many things which they would not, on landing, have believed they could throw away. We are told that in another month not a man would have remained alive.'

It is inconceivable, writes Miss Martineau, with a hope that we trust is not born of honest indignation only, that a British army should ever again sit down in a malarious valley, for want of a Department whose business it should be to secure the army from epidemics, as the commissariat secures it from starvation.

When they were about to set sail from that accursed shore to the undreaded battle-field, the medical *chef* appealed to Lord Raglan on the matter of ambulance provision, and he caused twelve wagons to be shipped, complete for use. He sailed before the transport, however, and 'some one' objecting to the arrangements, the wagons were ordered to be put ashore again. Ten were landed, the mules of all were drowned, and the harness was lost; so that *two wagons, without draught and harness, represented the ambulance of Lord Raglan's force, when it went out to meet the enemy.*

No wonder, under such circumstances of foresight, that after that first miserable bivouac by the seashore, Lord Raglan writes that his army was 'pursued by cholera to the battle-field.' It is true, 'in the ardour of attack they forgot all that they had endured;' but even they could not be for ever attacking. Lowered in health and tone by what they had gone through in Bulgaria, and by damp and exposure since they had landed in the Crimea, scurvy seized them, even before they became dependent upon salt provisions. We all remember how, when that dreadful cry arose for 'Lime-juice,' there was no less than 20,000 pounds of it lying close at hand, which it was nobody's business to speak about. In the same fashion, while 147,000 gallons of porter were in store at Scutari, and 170,000 rations of tea at Balaklava, this, says Sergeant Jowett, of the 7th Fusiliers, in his *Diary*, was how the British soldiers fared: 'Just fancy yourself in the middle of a field, up to your knees in snow, after walking about all night in it. You are hungry, and want something warm. Well, you have some raw coffee, some pork, and a little biscuit, with a small portion of sugar, and a little rum, or grog; of course you despatch the latter the moment you get hold of it. The other articles are different. You have no wood: none to be got, only the roots of brushwood. You manage to steal a pickaxe, for you cannot get one without, and then you commence grubbing for these roots. You are tired, but still you must have something warm. In the course of an hour or so, you manage to get a few roots; but the next thing is, how are you to light a fire? That has to be done, and must be done, if you wish to live. You manage to get your fire lighted after a great deal of trouble, and perhaps burning half the only shirt you have—that on your back—and then you have your raw coffee to roast or burn. You get a piece of tin, put the coffee-berries on it, and place the tin over the fire. All this time perhaps you are almost frozen to death. When the berry gets black, put on your tin of water, and get a piece of an old sack, that you have stolen from your employers, and two stones, and beat to powder, and then wait till your water boils; you then put it into the water, and your coffee is made. You have then your pork to boil; but that is not much trouble after your fire is lighted. I wonder how many would like to pass away three months in the manner I just picture. Not many, I think, though strong.'

That, however, was the break-down of the Commissariat; and we are now more immediately concerned with the absence of a Sanitary Department. Here are two eloquent pictures of Balaklava dirty and Balaklava clean, that must carry conviction to all, of the necessity for such an arm being permanently attached to the military service. 'The case of Balaklava was very striking. The town contained between 500 and 600 inhabitants before the army appeared above it. Sergeant Jowett was delighted with the first view of it. "A prettier little valley I never saw in my life; fruit in abundance; in fact, everything we could wish for. The poor people had all run away, and left their homes; they appeared to be quite taken by surprise." By other testimony, the place was as neat as a Dutch town. If the army had been supplied with sanitary officers, the valley would have been put in order for the coming crowd, and secured from corruption, before the men were allowed to enter upon any other business. A few hours at first would have made wharfs, and secured the water-courses, and made provision for the interment of dead bodies and other corrupting substances, and cleaned the dwellings, and arranged for the regular clearance of the harbour from all floating refuse. As there was nobody to do the preventive part, all the efforts of the commandant and the admiral failed to cure the mischief at a later time.

'When at length the Board of Health was proposed, in March 1855, the east side of the harbour had long been one mass of putrescence. Animals and vegetables had been thrown away there, and the salt waters passed through the refuse on the shore, causing an intolerable stench, and floated the blown carcasses of dead horses and decayed vegetables. At the head of the little harbour, the burying-ground was to the last degree offensive. I will not describe it. Now, if preventive methods had been instituted here, decency, and even health, might have been preserved, though 30,000 men were crowded where five or six hundred had lived before. A sanitary police would have prevented the killing of animals elsewhere than in the place of slaughter, and would have seen the offal buried; and so on throughout. When the road was made, and the best cleansing effected that the military and naval authorities could order, the state of things was far inferior to what prevention would have made it; and in the interval, thousands of men had died. Cholera and fever broke out, again and again, in the town and in the shipping in the harbour, between May and September; and Admiral Boxer himself fell a victim to cholera in June.

'But Balaklava became healthy at last, and while the crowd was still there. How was it? The Sanitary Commission undertook at last the business that should have been done first. Whatever filth could be burnt was burnt. The rest was, if movable, carried out far to sea and sunk; if not movable—as the contents of the grave-yard—it was thickly covered with lime, charcoal, and earth. Each dirty office had its proper place appointed, and the refuse disposed of. The decaying matter on the east side was deodorised and covered in; the shoal water at the head of the harbour was made dry land; the worst houses were pulled down, and the others cleaned and whitewashed within and without; drains were made, and stenches disappeared; the ships were cleansed, and daily surveyed by three naval surgeons, who acted as a sanitary police. So many had died, that the work went on slowly for want of hands; but by July the worst was over, and in a few weeks more "Balaklava became what it might have been from the beginning, as healthy a little seaport as can be seen."'

If the above affords a practical proof of what can be done by competent persons in the way of sanitary improvement, the following will shew what disease can do in the absence of any such antagonists. From June 1854 to June 1856 inclusive, there were received into the general hospitals on the Bosphorus 43,288 sick and wounded soldiers, of whom 5432 died; that is to say, out of this mighty host of sick, dying, and dead, fire and sword contributed only 4161 admissions and 395 deaths during the entire period! The change in both camp and hospital within one year, affords a lesson indeed; under one method of proceeding, 18,000 men died, who, under another method, would have lived. During the first seven months in the Crimea, the deaths from disease alone, without reckoning the casualties of war, were at the rate of 60 per cent. per annum of the whole force. During the last six months of the war, on the other hand, the mortality among the troops in camp was only two-thirds what it was at home!

Again, this is the account of what went on during the first part of the war, in hospital: 'It had never been clearly settled what was the duty of the medical officers, so that there was endless confusion about what each should be doing. The surgeon might be seen receiving, examining, and dispensing food and wine, when he was sorely needed by the bedside of the wounded. It was calamitous; but not so much so as the other alternative of leaving his patients without food. He might be seen early in the morning directing the sweeping and cleaning of the wards; or in the kitchen, boiling starch for bandages, because his orderlies did not know how to do it; or spending hours with pen in hand over accounts or returns, or records which could have been better kept by another man, while there was an actual deficiency of surgeons, and an epidemic in the place. As one consequence, the assistant-surgeon, whose proper business it was to dress wounds and sores, and make up medicines, and fill up the diet-rolls for his superior, was charged with the duties of that superior before it could be ascertained whether he was qualified. It is literally true that, while medical officers of proved skill were in unequalled demand in the wards, some were examining corks and tasting wines, and others were at the desk for hours of the day, their dressers and assistants having each the sole charge of sixty or a hundred grave cases.'

After the arrival of Miss Nightingale, the transformation from confusion to order, from filth to cleanliness, got to be complete, although the change was not, of course, one of pantomimic quickness. We have no space, however, for more than this general statement. In hospital, during the last six months of the war, the mortality among the patients scarcely exceeded that of the healthy Guards at home.

The great questions to be asked concerning the whole matter are two. 1. What is to be done for the future, that we may not hear of any more Lost Armies? To this the 'practical aims and recommendations' at the end of the volume, supply an answer in eight different suggestions, of which those under *Hygiene*—the care of the healthy—*a separate department*, and *Concert between departments*, seem to be of especial value. 2. Who is it stops the way? 'The good-will of the sovereign is believed in on solid grounds. Two secretaries of state have signified their approbation of the reforms recommended by the commissioners, and the commander-in-chief is regarded as the soldier's friend. The obstruction is supposed to lie lower down. Change is abhorred in government offices.'

Under a good organisation, each man in each department is responsible for getting some definite thing done. Under a bad one, and the one delighted in by our officials, he is responsible only for calling upon somebody else to do it. We cordially hope that such a system may no longer be suffered to destroy our soldiery, and that the concluding aspirations of our authoress may be fulfilled. 'Britons love their soldiers; they are proud of them; they intend to preserve their military quality from being ever questioned or overshadowed again. They will therefore take their own constitutional measures for securing a perfect relation henceforth between ENGLAND AND HER SOLDIERS.' If so, and if, as we cannot doubt, this volume should hasten the good time coming, there will be yet another woman's name associated with the cause of the soldier; and when that of Florence Nightingale is blessed, that of Harriet Martineau will also not be forgotten.

A HARD CASE.

I AM a barrister. I don't intend to disguise the fact in the least, for upon it hangs my expectation of pity, perchance of indignation, as to my hard lot, from those who shall peruse my present statement.

I paid L.50 to the honourable society of Gray's Inn; I ate a certain number of dinners; and at the end of three years, I found myself clad in a horsehair wig and black stuff-gown, sitting in the back row of seats in one of her Majesty's superior courts of common law at Westminster—a full-blown barrister.

I am blessed with a father, mother, four brothers, and five sisters, all living, and I am bound to say that I believe all these eleven individuals were equally convinced that in a short time my horsehair wig afore mentioned would be exchanged for a long powdered 'full-bottom,' my stuff-gown for one of flowered satin, embroidered with gold; and that preceded by my mace and purse-bearer, I should honour my family generally, and delight them in particular, as Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain.

It is true I attached myself to the 'common-law bar;' but what of that? Was not Mr —— made a vice-chancellor, and Mr —— Master of the Rolls? and did not they both belong to the common-law bar? Superior genius must ever burst through such trammels; and therefore, though an aunt down in Hampshire earnestly longed, and confidently expected, that I should become a common-law judge, and go the western circuit clad in scarlet robes, and dine with her, and accommodate her with a seat on the bench by my side, to the envy and astonishment of beholders—and had even darkly hinted to certain individuals the necessity she should soon be under of enlarging the sphere of her acquaintance, and of 'cutting' some who moved in a circle not quite in accordance with her anticipated honours—the general family belief was, as I said before, that in due time I should be appointed custodian of her Majesty's great seal and conscience.

To pass over a great deal of matter which would certainly be uninteresting to the general reader, I may mention that I have now been a barrister four years, and that the gross amount of my professional receipts during that period is ten shillings and sixpence, a fee received late one evening in the Court of Queen's Bench for moving the court when all my learned friends had, fortunately for me, gone home.

Ten shillings and sixpence in four years! 2s. 7½d. per annum! Rather a moderate amount for a member of a learned profession to earn; one, too, who duly attended during term in court; who studiously pondered over the 'points' which arose during an argument; who laughed at everything jocular uttered by the judge, and sneered, when *he* sneered, at an attempted piece of wit of an unfortunate counsel. To what could I trace my non-success?

Partly to my not *being known*. Being known is everything to a young barrister. Unless it be by some peculiarly fortunate event he is 'drawn out,' and exhibits great learning or acuteness, a gentleman of the bar may wait year after year for business, and never receive it. Thoroughly *known*, however, even to a few leading men of the other branch of the profession—I mean attorneys—the chances of success for a person of much less considerable talent are wonderfully greater.

There is Tom Jones, on the opposite staircase to mine. Jones hasn't a tenth part of the legal knowledge I have, though I say it; yet attorneys' clerks are continually rushing across to his room-door with those well-known bundles of blue-wove paper, neatly tied with red tape, called 'briefs;' and Tom is as regularly drawn out of his den by other attorneys' clerks to consultations, references, judges' chambers and court; and the money is rolling in, and 'Mr Jones' is on the lips of the judge, and 'my learned friend Mr Jones' on those of the counsel, morning, noon, and night. But, then, Jones's father is a well-known serjeant-at-law; and Jones's uncle is an old-established attorney; and Jones's grandfather was the Honourable Mr Baron Jones, Puisne Judge of His Majesty's Court of Exchequer at Westminster. So that when anybody asks: 'Who's this Jones?' the answer is: 'Oh, the nephew of old Jones of Cursitor Street—Jones, Brown, and Jones, you know.' 'Is he doing pretty well?' 'O lor', yes; he's stepping into the business of his father, the serjeant, as fast as he can.' 'Ah! I suppose he's a clever young man?' 'O dear, yes; why, his grandfather was old Baron Jones;' and this of course terminates the conversation, and Tom Jones has another acquaintance likely to give him a brief when he has one to bestow.

How different with myself! 'Who's this Brown?' 'What, Charles Brown of King's Bench Walk?'

'No; not him.' 'Edward Brown of Serjeants' Inn?' 'No; James Brown of Gray's Inn.' 'Don't know, I'm sure; never heard the name!'

Then a second great hindrance to my becoming great in a legal point of view, is, that I am very *modest*. Nothing so dangerous to your aspiring lawyer as modesty. I know very well that my knowledge of the vast structure of English jurisprudence is limited—very limited; and it takes me some considerable time to con over a case carefully, and apply to its solution all the legal principles I know; and after some hours, or it may be days, of hard thinking, I am sometimes in doubt as to whether plaintiff or defendant is in the right. 'Dreadful slow coach,' say the attorneys; 'very different from such a sharp chap as Bridger!' But, then, Bridger sees things intuitively; or, if he don't, he pretends he does, which is much the same thing.

'Bless my soul,' says Bridger the other day to old Tacks, the attorney, who had put rather a long case in his hands for his opinion—'bless my soul, you don't expect me to read all this; tell me in two words what it's all about.' Tacks of course did so. 'Plaintiff hasn't a smell of a chance,' says Bridger; 'swamped as safe as nails if he goes into court;' and down go a few words on the back of the brief, and five guineas are won! What is the consequence? 'Confoundedly sharp chap that Bridger,' says Tacks—'law at his finger-ends;' and Mr Bridger's business increases accordingly. 'But,' says the reader, 'now and then, such an off-hand practitioner must get into a scrape, and give a wrong or erroneous opinion.' Very true; and what is said? 'Ah! Bridger's wrong: well, it's wonderful, with his enormous practice, he is not oftener out than he is;' and so the matter ends. It is not indeed so much in chambers that such a man as Bridger shines, as at the bar. Hear him thunder away to the jury! By and by the judge drops down upon him with a little point of law. 'My lord, my learned friend has considered that matter,' says Bridger with the utmost coolness, and sits down to make way for some poor little parchment-faced man, as full of law as an egg's full of meat, who has been 'brought out' under the wing of his far less learned, but far more self-assured friend.

Now, I am not going to impose upon the reader with the assertion that men such as Jones or Bridger are the men who eventually become the burning and shining lights of the legal profession—it is not so. Jones and Bridger will each, perhaps, very rapidly rise to the possession of a great name and a large income as barristers; but most likely they will never rise higher. There is such a thing as profound legal knowledge, and there are offices to which every lawyer aspires, in which profound legal knowledge is indispensable. Fearfully out of his element would Mr Bridger be were he to wake up some morning and find himself attorney-general, solicitor-general, or judge! For such an office as this, the hard-studying, plodding, and untiring lawyer is the man—such a man as Evans over the way, who, twenty years ago, began the study of the law without a friend in the world. Calm, sure, and determined—with a mind formed for the most intense thought, and a body capable of enduring any amount of fatigue—Evans slowly and steadily advanced in his profession; difficulties innumerable were one by one conquered, labours overcome, and opposition mastered; from a pleading to the bar, from stuff-gown to silk, from a junior to a senior counsel, till yesterday the chancellor's messenger knocked at old Evans's door, and handed him a letter which announced that her Majesty was willing to appoint him one of her judges, as the successor of Mr Justice White, deceased the week before. Everybody knew Evans would get it, and everybody was glad of it. I said the appointment was an excellent one—and what a reward for hard and careful study—L.5000 a year, L.3500 retiring pension, a knighthood, and honours innumerable, both in town and on circuit.

I shall never arrive at such a consummation—unknown, modest, a moderate knowledge of the law. Of course, every respectable person would choose to rise in Evans's particular manner. A nice task have you set before yourself, good reader, if you intend so to do. Evans has probably read, and thoroughly digested, some six or seven thousand reported decisions; he has them all in his head; knows the several points which arose during the argument of each case; can exactly discriminate one cause from another, though differing in the most hair-breadth manner; and is able to refer in a moment to the volume and to the page where each is recorded. Evans, too, has read and thought over some few thousand acts of parliament; has unravelled the complicated sections of each; knows where the statute 'applies,' and where it *don't* apply; how part of the 27 Car. II., cap. 3, was repealed by 19th William and Mary, cap. 14, and re-enacted in a limited manner by 3 Geo. II., cap. 7, upon the true construction of which the great case of Shin *v.* Booker arose, which was decided by the Court of Common Pleas for the plaintiff, their decision being set aside by the Court of Exchequer Chamber, and confirmed on appeal to the House of Lords—and so on. Added to this, what labour has he undergone during the last twenty years! First, as a *pleader*, sitting in his quiet chambers hour after hour, and day after day, drawing up complicated declarations, pleas, replications, demurrers, &c.; then, as a junior counsel, bearing the labour and responsibility of hundreds of important cases, where property to a fabulous amount was concerned; then, as a 'leader,' arguing before juries, and before learned judges on points requiring an exquisite knowledge of every portion of the law, spending the whole of each day in the courts, and perhaps half the night at his place in parliament, watching bills through the House affecting the practice of the law, and scarcely knowing rest from one year's end to another.

Such were his labours in town. On circuit they were not less severe. Men of Evans's stamp, 'leaders' of the circuit, have entered an assize town with *ninety briefs* in their hands. Fancy, good reader, that you have reposed in you *one* long and difficult case, to arrange and conduct, what care and thought you would bestow upon it; then multiply that case by ninety, and calculate, if you can, the amount of head-aching and brow-throbbing you would endure in the consideration of them.

Lord Brougham, when leading the northern circuit, has been known not to take off his clothes for an entire week. The same great lawyer was obliged to travel from one assize town to another by night, and used to spend the hours in reading his briefs by lamp-light as he rolled along lying on a portable bed fitted up in his carriage.

'A great relief he will find it to be a judge,' says one of Evans's friends, talking over his good-fortune. Well, a great relief it certainly will be, so far as anxiety respecting the possible loss or diminution of business is concerned; but do not for a moment imagine, my friend, that judges have nothing to do.

One thing you may take for granted, with one or two exceptions, every judge has a holiday from about the middle of August to the end of October, but pretty hard the majority of them work during the remainder of the year. Taking the judicial year to commence on the 2d of November, the 1st day of Michaelmas Term, he will have to sit in Banc to hear and decide points of law from that day until the 25th of November, and then go a winter circuit to try prisoners in some remote counties, and this will bring our judge pretty nearly to Christmas-day. Then a week's holiday, and Hilary term begins, followed by a long spring circuit, perhaps the northern, with its three or four hundred prisoners, and two or three hundred causes to try. Then Easter term, Trinity term, and the summer circuit, and he will have completed the legal year, and find himself at the commencement of the long vacation. If to these duties you add sittings in the Privy Council and House of Lords, at the Old Bailey, in Error, in crown-cases reserved in the Courts of Chancery, on tax-cases, and plenty of laborious work at chambers, and at home in preparing judgments, and looking through private bills in the House of Lords, you will agree that an English judge has no sinecure office.

But I am wandering wonderfully from my own private discomforts in dilating thus upon the engagements of English judges. I shall never be a judge, not even of a county court, for I have not interest enough, and what imports it to me, therefore, whether those learned functionaries work much or little?

No, a 'briefless barrister' I am, and a briefless barrister I am likely to remain, unless matters take some remarkable turn. Now and then, a stray brief or reference may drop in, or even, by some fortunate chance, a revising appointment, or the secretaryship to a royal commission, but that is all; and whiskers —the just pride of the English bar—will turn gray, and forehead be wrinkled, and still I shall be sitting at the 'utter bar.'

It is a melancholy reflection, but my case, hard as it is, is the case of hundreds of other barristers, who, like myself, have not been blessed with interest, impudence, or profound learning. There are, probably, altogether, enough of barristers in England to undertake the conduct of the whole of the lawsuits yearly proceeded with in Europe!—how many, then, must be unemployed when but a small portion of the population of our own country are unfortunate enough to be plunged in litigation? The entrances to the church and to the medical profession are preceded by strict and searching examination, and the number of aspirants is by that means alone considerably diminished. A man may become a barrister without reading a volume or answering a question! Who would not be a barrister?

CELESTIAL AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture and horticulture—for the two are carried on together—may be regarded as the national occupations of the Chinese; and the great success which has attended their modes of cultivation, fostered as they have been by royal patronage, and aided by an imperial treasury, is such as to have gone far to render the inhabitants of that large and densely peopled country, comfortable, rich, and happy.

The vegetable crops produced in those parts of Southern China which are near Canton and Macao, are similar to those of Europe, and are grown for the express purpose of supplying, with that portion of their food, the European population of Hongkong and its surrounding districts. Large quantities of pease, potatoes, and onions are constantly reared for those markets, and there is also a constant demand, which is supplied by the trading-junks, for the white cabbages of Shan-tung and Peking; even in the more northern parts of the empire, wheat, barley, pease, beans, and different kinds of vegetables are a staple production; in addition to which, the cabbage oil-plant is extensively grown, chiefly for the useful oil which is obtained in considerable quantity from its seeds. In a recent work on China, we are informed that 'about Chin-choo and Amoy, the wheat-crops are so poor that the labourers pull them by the hand, in the same manner as we do on our moorlands in England and Scotland. They are, of course, much better in the rich district of Shang-hae, but the varieties of both wheat and barley are far inferior to ours; and, as the Chinese sow them too thickly, they are generally much drawn at the heads, and the corn small.' On the other hand, according to 'our own correspondent,' in China, 'they have no couch-grass, no thistles contending for the full possession of the land, as we see in Wales; no uninvited poppies, no straggling stalky crops, the poverty-stricken covering of an exhausted soil. At rare intervals, we see a large rich-coloured coxcomb flaunting himself among the cotton; but, generally speaking, there is not a leaf above the ground which does not appertain to the crop to which the field is appropriated.'

The chief food of the Chinese and other eastern nations being rice, the cultivation of this grain forms the principal occupation of the agricultural population; and as two crops of it are usually raised every hot season, followed by a crop of something else in winter, the people are always busily employed. The rice-grounds, extending over thousands of acres, are kept moist by a reticulation of canals, rivers, and water-ways, and the more easily, since they are frequently formed by extensive flats—or 'lands,' as they are called—below the level of the rivers, or arranged in terraces, convenient for water, on the sides of hills. The ground is most carefully prepared for the young rice-plants, which, previous to the period for transplanting, have been raised in little clumps in fields that have been so excessively manured as almost to be incapable of receiving additional supplies, the seed having likewise been steeped for a brief period in a liquid manure. The spots most favourable for the cultivation of rice are thus described in the *Highland and Agricultural Society's Journal*: 'They are such as are of an alluvial kind, as, for instance, where the soil is carried along by the streams which tumble down the sides of the hills, and being deposited near their feet, gives breadth to the little valleys, or forms a delta at their mouth. In this way, a field or farm is produced fit for the tiller; and the stream which deposited it still supplies a stock of water to replenish the banks and furrows. Thus, by a simple and beautiful provision of nature, the meadow is formed and irrigated by the same cause. The fields are parted by neat terraces, beside which the rills often glide in refreshing lapse, and the little fish sport in the radiance of a summer sun.' The land, then, having been previously flooded, the operation of ploughing is rendered comparatively easy, and is carried on by means of a buffalo, which, along with its human attendant, has to wade in a considerable depth of thin mud during the whole process. The ground is next gone over with a pair of harrows, tearing up and mixing the earth till it subsides into a soft, muddy level; the soil, by this process, cleaned and exquisitely pulverised, is made ready to receive the young rice-plants, which having been previously grown to the height of about ten inches, are very carefully lifted, in order to protect their fine roots, from their original beds, and replanted in 'spots' of a dozen plants. Mr Fortune, in his work on China, tells us that this operation is performed with wonderful celerity. 'A labourer,' he says, 'takes a number of plants under his left arm, and drops them in bundles over the land about to be planted, as he knows almost to a plant what number will be required. These little bundles are then taken up, and the proper number of plants selected and plunged by the hand into the muddy soil. When the hand is drawn up, the water immediately rushes into the hole, carrying with it a portion of soil to cover the roots, and the seedlings are thus planted and covered in without further trouble.' The fields are afterwards kept in a constant state of liquidity by means of a plentiful supply of water, and this is continued till the crop is about ripe, when it is no longer necessary; during its growth, all weeds are carefully removed, and the soil about the roots frequently stirred up. The rice-harvest is simple enough, as the grain is usually thrashed out in the field where it is grown. As the least shake separates the particle from the straw, the usual process with most kinds of rice is to dash it in large handfuls against the side of a tub, which is curtained round on one side, to shield it from the wind, and so the matter ends.

The great points in the agriculture of China are the systems of manuring and irrigation. The ostentatious mode of collecting the ordinary manure, while it sickens Europeans on the spot, seems laughable to those who contemplate it with the ocean between; but, independently of this kind of soil, the Chinese use for the same purpose all sorts of waste substances. One of these is trefoil, and another something called coronilla. After a season, these are cut down, and being mixed with mud and water, are left to rot, so that before the rice is ready to be planted, they may be reduced to that condition which renders them fit for manure. Burnt vegetable matter, well mixed with earth, makes a capital medicine for the fields, and, in consequence, it is largely used in the agricultural districts. 'During the summer months,' we are told, 'all sorts of vegetable rubbish are collected in heaps by the roadside, and mixed with straw, grass, parings of turf, &c., which are set on fire, and burn slowly for several days, until all the rank vegetable matter is decomposed, and the whole reduced to a rich black earth. It is then turned over several times, when it presents the same appearance as the vegetable mould used in gardens in England. This manure is not scattered over the land, but reserved for covering the seeds, and is applied in the following manner: When the seed-time arrives, one man makes the holes, another follows and drops in the seed, and a third puts a handful of the black earth on the top of them. Being principally vegetable mould, it keeps the seed loose and moist during the period of germination, and afterwards affords it nourishment.' In addition to this kind of manure, the Chinese concoct another from the seeds of certain vegetables. These are first made into a substance like our oil-cake; then, after being pounded into dust, are thrown broadcast over the fields. Bones, shells, sea-weed, lime, soot, ashes, and the multifarious refuse incidental to all conditions of humanity, are also plentifully made use of; likewise large quantities of decayed fish and crustacea, as well as the scrapings of ponds, canals, and water-ways.

The system of irrigation adopted by the Chinese is rendered necessary by the extensive rice-cultivation which is carried on. Water is the chief element in the growth of this article, as the fields require to be inundated during the whole time it is under cultivation. In one district of China, and that the very finest in the country, 'the Child of the Ocean,' to use the poetic language of the east, or to speak without metaphor, the river Yang-tsze-kiang, affords splendid facilities for irrigation; and in the extensive plains watered by this gigantic stream, there is an endless water-power brought to bear, by means of canals and rivulets. In other parts of the country, water is obtained from the hill-drainage and from the numerous mountain-streamlets. Grounds which cannot be watered either by the rivers or by the mountain-rills, are irrigated by means of the water-wheel, which 'raises the water by a series of flat boards, which traverse in a trough, and sweep the fluid with them. It is somewhat upon the principle of our chain-pump, which lifts the water by a line of buckets; but instead of the bucket, it has merely a flat piece of board, which, by exactly fitting the channel in which it moves, confines the water between itself and its fellow. In fact, the bottom, two sides of the trough, and the two successive float-boards, compose a sort of extemporary bucket. Our recently discovered method of raising water by means of a band is only one step ahead of this in simplicity.'

The system of terrace-cultivation is much practised by the Chinese; and it is no uncommon thing to see hills three thousand feet above the level of the sea under cultivation to their summits. By means of this device, a great amount of additional space is obtained for the growth of rice and other crops, as also a more plentiful supply of water from the mountain-ravines, which, as a means of economising labour, are diverted in all directions into the highest terraces; and after they have absorbed as much of the fluid as is requisite, the water is then run into the next one; and so on, till all have been in turn inundated. 'In this way,' says Mr Fortune, 'the whole of the rice-terraces are kept continually flooded, until the stalks of the crop assume a yellow ripening hue, when the water being no longer required, it is turned back into its natural channel, or led to a different part of the hill, for the nourishment of other crops. These mountain-streams, which abound in all parts of the hilly districts, are of the greatest importance to the farmer; and as they generally spring from a high elevation in the ravines, they can be conducted at pleasure over all the lower parts of the hills. No operation in agriculture gives the farmer and his labourers more pleasure than leading their streams of water from one place to another, and making them subservient to their purpose.'

The ingenuity and industry of the Chinese are proverbial and continuous. The old story of the nankeen breeches is a case in point—where the celestial tailor, by laborious industry, imitated the various patches and darns belonging to the vestments in question, which had been sent to him as a pattern for a new pair. We trace the same painstaking and industrious spirit in all they do, and particularly in their operations in agriculture and horticulture. Their idea of hill or terrace cultivation, and of having two, and sometimes three crops from the same ground, in order to extend their resources of growth, and make the most of the growing season, is a capital one; and one cannot help expressing a feeling of surprise at what is achieved by such simple means, for all the agricultural implements used in China are of the rudest kind. Let us give their labour its due meed of praise; for principally to sheer hard work, combined with method and great powers of 'detail,' must the results which are attained be attributed. As an example of what is achieved, take the following: 'Wheat, which is a winter crop, is reaped in the Shang-hae district generally about the end of May, while the proper time for putting in the cotton-seed is the beginning of that month, or the end of April. In order, therefore, to have cotton on the wheat-lands, the Chinese sow its seeds at the usual time amongst the wheat; and when the latter is reaped, the former is several inches above ground, and ready to grow with vigour when it is more fully exposed to the air.'

The *modus operandi* adopted in the cultivation of cotton has been frequently detailed, as has also the mode of growing the tea-plant, so that we need not describe the processes adopted in these branches of labour. The only other features of celestial agriculture which we are called upon to notice in this paper, are, first, that the Chinese do not follow any system of fallowing their land—indeed, the land is so rich that it is unnecessary to give any portion of it a rest, as it never feels the burden of successive years of cropping, even although two, and sometimes three crops, are taken from it annually; and, secondly, that the ground is let out in small farms of a few acres each, as was the custom fifty years ago in our own country. Gigantic capitalists have not yet altered this state of affairs in China, and the celestial farmer lives in a simple and patriarchal style in his little cottage. 'There are few sights more pleasing than a Chinese family in the interior, engaged in gathering the leaves of the tea-plant, or, indeed, in any of their agricultural pursuits. There is the old man—it may be the grandfather, or even the great-grandfather—patriarch-like, directing his descendants, many of whom are in their youth and prime, while others are in their childhood, in the labours of the field. He stands in the midst of them bowed down with age, but—to the honour of the Chinese as a nation—he is always looked up to by all with pride and affection, and his old age and gray hairs are honoured, revered, and loved. . . . . When, after the labours of the day are over, they return to their humble and happy homes, their fare consists chiefly of rice, fish, and vegetables, which they enjoy with great zest, and are happy and contented. I really believe that there is no country in the world where the agricultural population are better off than they are in the north of China. Labour with them is pleasure, for its fruits are eaten by themselves, and the rod of the oppressor is unfelt and unknown.'

So says Mr Fortune in his *Wanderings*, but 'our own correspondent'—who assures us that the best way to see the agriculture of a country is to shoot over it, and so gather pheasants and a knowledge of the crops at the same time—tells us that there is a *per contra* to this state of felicity, and that 'these happy fields are overrun by extortionate mandarins, pillaging soldiers, marauders who in small bands are called robbers, and in large bands aspire to be rebels, and to be led by "kings," river-pirates who levy blackmail, and occasional swarms of locusts which darken the sun.' We cannot wonder at this: it would indeed be an exception to all experience, if a mighty nation, with a population of one hundred and sixty millions, far advanced in material civilisation, had not some grievances to stir it into more determined action, and to remind its people that there is an earthy humanity, after all, in their celestialism.

SOME NEW ASPECTS OF INDIA-RUBBER.

New applications of india-rubber to mechanical purposes are being discovered almost every month: in springs to lift the saw in sawing-machines, and with a considerable economy of power, for the saw descends by its own weight, and needs no push to raise it: in springs for cables, or for moorings, proof against any strain to which they may be subject: and in a new code of signals recently introduced into the navy at Plymouth, comprising a series of flexible cones. By substituting india-rubber cloth for canvas, one set of ropes or halliards is got rid of—namely, that by which the cone was hauled down, for the india-rubber collapses and descends of itself, and only requires the rope which hauls it up. Attach a bundle of india-rubber ropes or springs to a beam overhead; stretch down spring after spring, and hook them to the heavy weight to be lifted, and presently the weight rises as it were of itself. Mr Hodges of Southampton Row has invented many ingenious applications of this sort. His india-rubber radiating carriage-springs obviate entirely the effect of jolts and noise upon driver and passengers. The wheels are of course heard to rattle upon the pavement; but there is no communication of the sound through the carriage. A layer of vulcanised india-rubber is inserted in the joints of the girders of the new Westminster Bridge. There have been also some very clever applications of india-rubber to surgical instruments, producing results by mere elasticity, which could only be accomplished otherwise by complicated mechanism.

THE CURATE'S FIRESIDE.

I HAVE one only daughter,
 But she is more to me
Than if I had a score or so
 To cluster round my knee;
And ne'er by boon-companion
 Was idler's time beguiled,
As the curate's leisure moments
 By the prattle of his child.

My worthy friend and vicar,
 The Reverend Mr Blount,
Of little rosy children
 Has more than he can count;
And the good man smiles serenely,
 And pats them on the head,
With a hearty benediction,
 When they toddle off to bed.

My brother-curate, Webster,
 O'er Mr Malthus pores,
Thinks only bachelors are blessed,
 And babies only bores;
Says curates must not marry;
 For 'tis his rule in life—
First get a good fat living,
 And then a wealthy wife.

I envy not the vicar
 His patriarchal glee,
When the thirteenth Blount lies choking
 Across his nurse's knee;
Nor yet the unhappy Webster,
 His lodgings lone and bleak
(With linen and attendance,
 At one pound five a week).

I wait for no fat living;
 I heed not paltry pelf;
'Twas not for that I wooed my wife,
 But for her 'ain' dear self;
Though she had brought a dowry
 Were fit for peer or prince,
'Twere nothing to the treasure
 That she hath borne me since.

For oh! when home returning
 Dispirited, unstrung,
There's magic in our Mary's laugh,
 There's music on her tongue;
And her dark eyes flash and sparkle,
 And the colour mounts her cheek,
As words come crowding faster
 Than her little lips can speak.

And so, when sad and weary
 From scenes of care and sin;
Where foul diseases rage without,
 And fouler lusts within;
Where so much is dark and dreary,
 Where all is sin-defiled,
I thank God for the innocence
 About my little child.

Dear to the Christian pastor
 The flock he's charged to keep;
Dear for His sake who gave him
 The message, 'Feed my sheep.'
Oft prays he for the erring:
 'Lord, guard them when they roam;'
But the fondest prayers are aye for one—
 The little lamb at home!

J. H. H.

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MARSEILLE UNDER A WAR ASPECT.

I HAVE been awakened this bleak, cold May morning—for the keen, penetrating *moestroom* is blowing, despite the bright sunshiny weather; and bronchitis and bad coughs are wrangling with each other for precedence—by the dismal, distant booming of the celebrated bell of Notre Dame de la Garde, a church, I am delighted to think, situated on the summit of a cliff, a good three miles away from my lodgings at No. 14 Rue des Minimes. Notre Dame de la Monte, which I can see from the window of my bedroom, is also inviting the Catholic to matins; so are a dozen other churches and convents named after every saint in the calendar. Under these circumstances, and as the intonations are exceedingly lugubrious, I have nothing for it but to 'make an effort,' and turn out for the day. There is nothing very inviting in the aspect of my dormitory: no fireplace; no carpet, save an atom of rug at the bedside; and a red brick flooring, iced by the cold east wind. Despite woollen socks and slippers, the first contact of the feet with this frozen pavement is tantamount to a very smart electric shock. I shudder to think of the dreadful but indispensable morning ablutions—the fearfully cold water, and abominably hard soap; the towel like a scrubbing-brush; the agony of rinsing one's mouth with diluted ice. But there is no remedy. *C'est la guerre* that occasions me all this misery; for, however wealthy that fickle dame, Fortune, should choose to make me, I could not at this moment obtain any lodgement in any hotel, and so I am glad to live and board in private lodgings. Two meals a day, for thirty-five francs a week, are cheap enough, I'm sure. If it was not, however, for the cold wind and plenty of exercise, I really do not know how I should dispose of breakfast or dinner. Appetite, beyond a doubt, is the best sauce for cheap lodgings at Marseille. We breakfast at noon; we dine at 8 P.M. Anything in the interval is charged as extras; and exceedingly heavy extras too. Our breakfast consists principally of *hippikick*, or cold water boiled to death, with plenty of grease floating on the surface; parsley, and large slices of bread; a plate of fried pork-rind; a small plate of potatoes; a large amount of salad and beet-root; with wine and bread *ad libitum.* For dinner, there is another display of soup; an atom of boiled meat; a fragment of cheese; a small plate of walnuts, or almonds and raisins; and the indispensable beet-root and salad. There are two others who board and lodge in this establishment—two ill-used, hungry government clerks, with plenty to do, and very small pay, and, worse than all, prodigious appetites. Every shortcoming in the way of food or delicacy is attributed to the war; and hearty are the secret maledictions bestowed upon its instigators.

Madame, who is prodigal in her expressions of good-wishes, raps at the door just as, half-shivering, half-feverish, I seize my great-coat and hat, and make for the dining-room—the only apartment in the house that can boast of a fireplace (excepting the kitchen); and where, if we happen to be in the landlady's good books, we have broiled tomatas, well stuffed with mince-meat and other delicacies, once or so a fortnight—a dish that brings tears to the eyes of my two fellow-lodgers, and water to their anxious palates. Madame, who is a Parisian, small, stately, and of immense etiquette, begs to know whether I would wish for *café au lait.* There is no time to be lost, as the wood-fire has burnt rather low, and charcoal and firewood are a matter of rigid economy in cold, bleak Marseille.

Monsieur, madame's husband, is a German; active, money-making, obliging, addicted to beer and pipes, and to a fortnightly musical soiree, where compatriots assemble in a convenient back-parlour, beyond the *gens d'armes'* beat, and sing, with really much taste and talent, terrible old patriotic songs, that might cost them all their liberty.

As I enter the dining-room, I find it filled with *ces braves gens*, 'les Zouaves.' They are refreshing themselves with *petits verres* of cognac, very small and temperate as regards size, but the constant replenishing of which renders it a matter of doubt whether it would not save time and trouble if they at once uncorked the decanters and swallowed their fiery contents at a draught.

There are, besides, no lack of soldiers of the line; and each one is accompanied by two or three mechanics or tradesmen—bosom-friends—who prefer the quiet decency of Herr Heitmann's establishment to the noisy *cabarets* and tobacco-shops, which are so plentifully scattered over this ancient township of Marseille. There are, moreover, not a few really pretty damsels in captivating *grisette* caps.

Interspersed also are a few matrons—most of them in the laundry-line—who have only quitted their washing-tubs to bid a fond adieu to some sunburnt disciple of Mars, a son, a nephew, a cousin, brother, or lover. The *petit verre* is never raised to the lips without an appropriate toast: 'Confusion to the dogs'—that is, *les chiens.* There were three *chiens* that constituted the pith of a Hungarian toast—les Russ-chiens, les Pruss-chiens, and les Autre-chiens (the Russians, the Prussians, and the Austrians).

At present, diplomatic circumstances circumscribe the extent of this parting jubilee; and the French soldiers imbibe incredible quantities of burning alcohol to the annihilation of the Austrians, and to the glory of *la belle France* and the Piedmontese. Three shorn monks of the Carmelite order interfere with my café au lait and the libations of the soldiery, demanding rather than begging alms for the masses hereafter to be repeated to extricate defunct Frenchmen from purgatory. The women fall ready victims to these usurers of futurity; and many a tear-bedimmed eye willingly pays the last sou to secure prayers and benedictions on behalf of that beloved one now about to be ruthlessly torn away from her.

Notre Dame de la Monte, of which the Rue des Minimes is the principal street, has its everyday quiet disturbed by the incessant tramp of soldiery; the shouts, laughter, and jests of the men; the smothered sighs and groans of the women. Coffee being despatched, and the atmosphere redolent of cognac and tobacco, I ensconce myself in a great-coat and comforter of huge dimensions, and with my loins girt up, issue forth—a giant refreshed with café au lait—to do battle against the keen east wind. I have often walked in this town in quiet and peaceable times, when the keeper of the *cabaret*, just at the corner of the Boulevards de Rome—an olive-complexioned, oily-looking man, in soiled shirt-sleeves, and a decidedly greasy red night-cap—has sat smoking his morning-pipe on an old seedy chair, and touted hopelessly for passengers. This morning he looks more greasy than ever, but is immense in importance. Hard work has he and the good dame his wife in complying with the frequent and urgent demands of the throng that cluster round his small and fly-bitten bar, who are clamorous for stimulants to nerve them against the horror of sea-sickness. Vast though the supply of *absinthe* in his cellars (if he has any), may be, it can be hardly adequate to meet the demand. As for the noise issuing from this den, which is foul with unseemly odours, there is nothing in my experience that I can compare it to unless it be a bird-fancier's shop in Ratcliff Highway, where parrots and paroquets constitute the principal inhabitants. Next to it, enveloped in smoke, is a tobacco-shop besieged by a legion of these 'sons of Gaul,' smoking, bantering, gasconading, and laying up a good stock of their much-relished weed; to be lit, as they protest, from the smouldering ruins of that fated capital, Vienna.

On either side, I have no lack of companions: Jeans and Jacks, Bruchets and Clements, are all accompanying their friends to the same destination—namely, La Joliette or the new harbour. Soldiers there are innumerable, many of them raw recruits, under heavy marching-order, with knapsacks on their backs; their bundles suspended over their shoulders from stout shillalies; their left hand tightly grasping the ration of bread, just dispensed at the quarter-master-general's departments, and their great-coat pockets well stuffed with sausages, hard-boiled eggs, and other dainties, destined to comfort them during the short but turbulent sea-voyage from the shores of France to *fair and fruitful Italy*. Not a baker in this street, not a *charcutier* of whom you can buy pork in any shape, vilely seasoned with garlic—but has voluntarily contributed to the inward comfort of these *enfants*. Not a voice, from the shrill, cracked intonation of the wizard-like old woman that cries her *betterave* (beet-root), to the robust and aproned proprietor of the Hôtel de Deux Mondes, but greets these emancipators of Italy and liberty with loud and continued plaudits. Neither are these mere lip-offerings. The old lady with the beet-root persists in emptying her basket of its unseemly-looking contents into the huge pockets of the loose gray coats; the *marchand d'épicerie* supplies them with valuable drugs, gratis, preventatives against every contagious disease; the tavern-keepers without resistance pour the contents of their canteens down the parched throats of these brave fellows; the shoeblacks by the always overflowing and muddy pumps at the bottom of the hill, offer to polish their boots merely for the honour of the thing; a cadaverous-looking old bishop, coming home from early mass, pauses to give them his blessing; and wily old shopkeepers and moneyed merchants turn out *en masse* to swell the cry of Viva la France, Vive l'Italie.

As a matter of course, if not of necessity, I join in all these hearty outbursts of enthusiasm; and, the valves of my heart being opened, like a young oyster on a rainy day, I am induced to stand treat to some half-score market-women and others who sell fish and vegetables, and who are ill adapted to their trade, if I may be permitted to judge from their apparent objection to anything like cold water. The dew that makes them flourish like their own cabbages is peculiar to France, and is commonly known as cognac.

Plunging through the sea of abominations which mark the crossing of that great street, the Rue Paradis—a street deteriorating awfully from the significance of its appellation—I find myself and my brave companions hustled and jostled by a multitude of other warlike aspirants, who, despite the want of room, will persist in keeping their hands far over the wrist ensconced in their capacious peg-top trouser-pockets. These are all waiting for the order to embark, and, as I might as soon penetrate the fiery desert of Sahara as this inflexible mass, I take shelter for a while in the Café Turc, perfectly dazzled by the splendour of its gilding, and smooth, mirror-surfaced tables, and not a little refreshed with its *café noir*. As I sit, making pretence to read the last number of the *Pays*, I wonder to myself whether that great tower, the Tower of Babel, could have rivalled this place for variety of language and dialect, and whether a hubbub such as is going on round about me ever occurred in that ill-fated edifice, I do not really think its clamour could have exceeded the voices, gesticulation, clanking of glasses, clattering of spurs, swords, and firearms, oaths, adjurations, laughter, coughs, stamping, and *vivas*, which make the very walls of this elegant and commodious *café* reverberate again. Of one thing I feel positive, that the costume of the multitude in Babel's tower was not so variegated, and indeed, it is likely, the whole wardrobe of those speculative builders might have been easily packed in a couple of good-sized plantain leaves. In this respect, we of Marseille have the advantage. From the peg-tops before alluded to, down to the Zouaves' picturesque uniform, I can distinguish the height of Paris fashion—the wide-awake of the Yankee—the twenty yards of white inexpressibles sported by the Greek—the dirty old cloak and turban of the Hebrew from Gibraltar—the reckless dishabille of the English skipper—the slouched cap of the Maltese nondescript: in short, every fashion, every colour, every costume, that the known world produces, except, perhaps, that of the Pawnee Indian. And if I want to see a personification of that character, I have only to step over to the tobacco-shop, next door, at the sign of L'Indien Rouge, and there, large as life, is a figure of the Pawnee, with a nice little scalp-knife in one hand, and in the other, a respectable old gentleman's wig, with specimens of tobacco in it for the general approval of the public.

Whilst I am seated at my mirrored circular table—and the whole room seems one mass of mirrors, except under foot—somebody taps me on the shoulder, and I recognise, despite enormous vegetation of beard and moustache, Monsieur le Capitaine, who served bravely in the Crimea. I shrink at my own reflection, to think how insignificant my plain civilian's costume looks beside that of the glittering throng that surround me. Monsieur le Capitaine is, however, a plain, sensible, straightforward man—a man of few words, but ready action—brave as a lion, and amiable as a lamb. He is no Gascon. He looks upon the pending storm in Italy as a very serious struggle, and one which will try the mettle of the French army to its utmost. Being joined by a party of Zouaves, the conversation turns upon the exploits and deeds in the Crimea, when we fought and bled side by side; and even these *braves* condescend to sprinkle a little praise upon some of our troops. The '*Scoose Greece*' they laud up to the skies. That famous charge of theirs was something *magnifique*. I discover that the praises relate to the gallant Scots Greys. Intermingled with the throng are three or four merry, laughing *vivandières*, in full costume; their exceedingly pretty and picturesque costumes adding greatly to the gaiety of the scene. At last the bugle sounds the order to fall in; in a second the *café* is deserted; the troops deploy and form a long solid line along the borders of the old harbour, which I can smell, though I cannot see it for the human mass intervening. The shipping is all decked out with flags, and the decks are crowded with enthusiastic spectators. The ships that ride parallel with the old port are also dressed out in holiday attire, and the noise and the cheering are deafening. At last the word is given to march; the band strikes up the march in *William Tell*. Amidst the regular tramp and clank of the soldiers, and the plaudits of the populace, we proceed, still skirting the edges of the old port: amidst immense piles of shot and warlike ammunition, which are in the act of being shipped off as rapidly as they can be for the seat of war: amidst a multitude of petty shops exposing for sale curiosities from every part of the known world: amidst piles of coral-baskets from the Feejee Islands, mats from China, shells from Ceylon: amidst the screaming of cockatoos, parrots, and paroquets, of brilliant plumage; fidgety and restless squirrels; cooking-houses for foreign ships, with marvellous English inscriptions (no ship in harbour is permitted a fire or light on board): past the boat-maker's yard, where, in large letters, I am informed that 'Here *boots* are coppered ver ship' (very cheap); down by the potato-warehouse, with '*berdatties from Oran*.' I march past all these to the music of *William Tell;* and before leaving the stench of the old port, I have occasion to witness the blustering deportment and consequential airs of Monsieur le Capitaine, who commands the *Sans Souci*, or tug-boat (the only one, I believe, at Marseille; and hence the importance of the skipper), who is shouting and yelping, and roaring at the unfortunate and crest-fallen master of a merchant-vessel, laden to the water's edge with warlike munition, and which the *Sans Souci* is tugging out to sea. If that man's mouth was a field-piece, it could hardly make more noise; fortunately, however, the volleys he fires are only oaths; and I chuckle to hear him call the crest-fallen master a *mange conduite*—a fellow that eats his conduct.

A wheel to the right, and one to the left, bring us to La Joliette, the really handsome and new harbour at Marseille, which is nearly choked with vessels and steamers, transports and men-of-war; where everything is bustle and hurry. A fortunate itinerant tinman sells off his stock of small panikins in less time than it takes me to write this, for they are in great demand amongst the soldiery, and will prove useful in sunny and thirsty Italy.

The embarkation is a ceremony of very short duration, most of the soldiers scrambling over the ship's side, and so on to the decks, hailing each other with 'prenez place pour Vienne, messieurs.' Many of them, poor fellows, are taking their places to a far more distant country.

Before going back to my lodgings again, I climb up to the top of Notre Dame de la Garde; the ascent is weary, but enlivened by the throngs of women, who are carrying candles and other peace-offerings to lay at the Virgin's shrine, and implore safeguard for those going and gone to do battle. There are, moreover, sundry brown Maltese skippers coming up to perform vows, made in rough weather at sea, when, as one of them tells me, if it had not been for the intervention of the Virgin, they must all have been lost. Notre Dame de la Garde is considered the sailors' sanctuary. When I get to the top at last, I buy a small relic of the old woman licensed to sell them just at the entrance. It is not for my pen to describe the magnificent and comprehensive panorama which stretches out before me on all sides. Going home again, I take another and a shorter cut up a very narrow, very dirty, very steep street, which will bring me out, however, just at Heitmann's door. The slattern, slovenly, grease-besmeared damsel in slippers and uncombed hair, seated on yonder door-step, is lamenting the departure of her lover, a recruit. The worthless old hag over the way, who empties her slops right into the middle of the street, and splashes me up to the knees, has three sons serving in the army. Every one, down to the wretched cobbler, in a miserable tank under a cabaret, has something to say about la guerre; and at every ten minutes the conversation gets of such thrilling interest, that parties of five and six, of all sexes, rush over to the nearest cabaret, to quench their enthusiasm with another petit verre. Not one word of complaint do I hear on any side about dearness of provisions, or such like doleful talk.

EUPHEMISMS.

The ancient Greeks, than whom there has been no nation more accursed by generation after generation of youth since the world began, were nevertheless a polite and agreeable people enough among themselves. They had a horror, amounting to superstitious dread, of mentioning unpleasant things, and when they were obliged to do so, always hinted at them delicately, instead of blurting them out. They did not, as is vulgarly asserted in the school-books, compel Socrates to drink hemlock—in so many words—but ventured to recommend him, with their best wishes, a desirable sedative—very likely as advertisers of cooling beverages are wont to phrase it, 'especially refreshing at that particular season.'

Similarly, as we are all aware, when the great gulf opened its terrible jaws in the Forum at Rome, it was termed, with facetious tenderness, by the Latin friends of Marcus Curtius, 'quite a nice opening for a young man.'

The system of Euphemism, therefore, upon which we justly pride ourselves, and without which it would be scarcely possible for the Queen's government, or any other, to be carried on, is derived from the most venerable sources, and may be written about, I feel confident—or this present writer would be the last to put pen to paper—without any sacrifice of dignity.

The first personal reminiscence of its operation which occurs to me, took place at a time when I was of very tender years, but under such peculiar circumstances of aggravation, that I shall probably never forget it. I was taken out one morning by my mother and a female attendant to enjoy a ride in a 'coachey-poachey'—which was a dusty, rumbling hack-carriage, as I well remember, with some filthy straw at the bottom of it, which I sucked with exceeding relish, and afterwards offered with the greatest liberality to my companions. I did not know for what particular act of goodness this treat had been conferred upon me, but accepted it with that unquestioning simplicity with which children do receive all kinds of benefits as their lawful dues; nor does that beautiful faith in our own good deserts fail always afterwards, but is not seldom found to flourish down to the brink of the grave, even among grown-up persons. We arrived at a strange door with an enormous brass plate upon it—which, if I had been a more diligent child, and could have deciphered it, would have turned me, like the Medusean shield, into stone, with horror—and were ushered into a small, well-lighted apartment, where there was a very gentleman-like person, who expressed at once an impertinent desire to look into my mouth. I was never of a suspicious disposition, but this request seemed so similar in character to that which had heralded a black dose upon a previous occasion, that I declined it at once. No gift-horse, conscious of maturity, could have raised a more terrible discord than did I at the idea of such a liberty being taken with me; and in my bellowings, I unconsciously disclosed the very secret that was required of me. The very gentleman-like person smiled so perseveringly, that I got to be half convinced of his innocence; while my nurse—for my mother, with averted face, was dropping tear after tear into a china flower-vase by that time—completed his triumph by the following hypocritical and heartless remark: 'Now, Peter, dear, open its mouth, and shut its eyes, and see what Heaven will send it!'

At this adjuration, which was wont to be the introduction by which the coming joys of peppermint and barley-sugar were heightened, I lay back in the chair with my young mouth watering with expectation—and had a double tooth wrenched out from the back of my upper jaw! It was a necessary operation, and, if I know myself, I don't think it would ever have been effected by a more straightforward method; still, I was of opinion that the whole morning's work, from the coachey-poachey to the unrealised expectations from Providence, were practical deceptions of the basest character; until my father—whose views I have here adopted—assured me that they were nothing more than Euphemisms, and hastened my conviction with half-a-crown and a mixed biscuit.

The next occasion upon which I became a victim to this delicate classicism, was when a lad, at a great Public School. The form to which I belonged was about to conclude its labours in the long school-chamber; the clock was on the stroke which would liberate us for all that summer afternoon, when up strode a Prepostor—so denominated, perhaps, from the absurdity of his prematurely ecclesiastical white cravat—and withered my blithe spirit with these three simple syllables: 'Jones, to *stay*.' Never did spell of inimical Magician operate upon prosperous Prince with a more sudden or disastrous power. At sound of it, the visions which were thronging my young brain, of cooling river and grassy mead, dissolved upon the instant; in their place I beheld an inconvenient chamber, crowded with expectant faces, wearing that expression of delight which mortals are said to feel in the misfortunes of their friends; wave on wave, they surged away far back through the open doorway, and left a solemn void, a dreadful space, in the centre of the apartment. Therein stood a Doctor of Divinity in a long silk petticoat, with an enormous pudding-whipper in his hand, and presenting the appearance of a cook upon a Sunday, or of some old-fashioned lady who prefers to superintend in person the concoction of her own sweets; beside him stood a young male assistant, a classical scullion, whose anomalous mission it was to lift linen and yet commit no robbery. Before these two stood a sombre object, resembling something between that instrument upon which Louis XVI. suffered death, and a pair of bedroom-steps. This was the Flogging Block, the sacrificial altar whereon those who disobeyed Etona's edicts were offered up every lawful day; and when Jones was told to 'stay,' he was in truth euphemistically given to understand, that in him it was awaiting its victim.

Thus, while Language, according to some authorities, is given to us to conceal our thoughts, the intention of Euphemism is to disguise our meaning.

'My Honourable Friend, if he will allow me to call him so,' is that gross misstater of fact, that unprincipled truckler to a dishonest minister, the miscreant Figgins, who has secured the place which was to have been mine, and in whose company I would scarcely sit at the same festive table.

The 'fellow-citizen whom we have all seen growing up amongst us,' and who was 'one of our own selves' at the last Muddleborough election, had never been set eyes upon by his flowery proposer until the day of nomination; while his sole local connection with the place in question consisted in his having come to Muddleborough, which is an out-of-the-way spot enough, for the convenience of getting a certificate of bankruptcy, which he accomplished at a period of life when he could scarcely be said to be 'growing up' by even an eastern poet.

'My Learned Brother' is Tom Wiggins, who has just been called to the Bar, and knows rather less of English law than a Siamese of sherry-cobbler; while his 'impassioned and forcible appeal,' by which I beg the jury not to be led away, bore about the same relation to eloquence as a cat in walnut-shells upon the ice bears to ordinary walking.

When one scholar writes of another as being 'somewhat too rash a commentator,' he means that the man has the impertinence to substitute his own brass for the author's gold; that he is a classic liar who deserves to be struck quite literally; and whenever the word 'emendation' is made use of, we may be sure that term is meant to carry with it the full signification of 'forgery.'

'A good fellow at heart' is no more to be trusted than some obviously rotten apple which has had the same eulogium conferred upon it; and if it be added that 'he is nobody's enemy but his own,' the expression commonly describes a man who is so extraordinarily brutalised, that he is careless of himself as well as of others.

'A previous engagement' means, 'I should be bored to death if I found myself in your drawing-room;' or, 'I hate evening-parties;' or, 'Your wine is bad, and I hear nothing in your conversation to make up for it.'

'An amiable young man,' is a simpleton who commonly wears a waistcoat which was never a fast colour, and is very much washed out, while his mind is in a somewhat similar condition; and the same person is denominated by the more vulgar of his associates, a 'pump.'

Vulgarity has no Euphemisms; a 'whizzer' is not a more delicate form of expression than 'a man of genius,' nor 'a stunner' than 'a pretty girl.'

Crime, on the other hand, is very much averse to calling a spade a spade, or a crow-bar a [illegible] It is accustomed to speak of one of the most formidable of known housebreaking implements under the endearing title of a 'jemmy;' while a watch is [illegible] a 'super,' perhaps as being the short for 'a superfluity;' and so expressing by its title a sort [illegible] palliation for appropriating those of others [illegible] ourselves.

When a gentleman of the criminal profession [illegible]mits murder with a bludgeon, or strangles a [illegible] citizen by means of the garrotte, the newspapers are happy to report that the police have already a clue to the detection of the ruffian; his personal friends only express a fear that he will be 'wanted,' and when he is caught and condemned to death, or penal servitude, they speak of him euphemistically as being in 'trouble.' What set us thinking upon this eminently classical subject, was the following scene, which we were lately witnesses of at a certain medical dispensary.

A young woman of delicate appearance was making application for some medicine.

'You look very pale, my good girl,' observed the tender-hearted young practitioner.

'I have only come from my confinement three weeks,' replied she.

It might have been the sun shining upon him through the medium of a gigantic red bottle in the window, but if it was not, the tender-hearted young practitioner was blushing violently.

'I don't think you should come out in the cold so soon,' observed he, rebukingly; 'and where have you left your baby?'

'Oh, please sir, I have not got a baby.'

The tender-hearted young practitioner became of an unripe plum colour at having thus inadvertently hurt the young woman's feelings.

'Ah, dear me,' said he, 'so the poor little thing died, did it?'

'No, sir,' explained the young woman, hanging down her head; 'I mean I have only just come out of *prison*, sir, in consequence of "a mistake" about some clothes.'

THE USE OF THE RIFLE.

At a time like the present, when *rifle-clubs*, *rifle-volunteers*, *riflemen*, and *rifles*, are matters which occupy the minds of some million of individuals, it may be as well to turn our thoughts to the practical and efficient use of the weapon.

To shoot is one thing; to kill, is another. When we shoot, we like to kill, or at least to hit what we fire at. If the target should happen to be some impertinent invader of our country, we admit that we should entertain a desire to lodge a neatly formed conical bullet just between the fifth and sixth rib on the left side of the said intruder. This wish does not arise from a blood-thirsty or unforgiving spirit, but from the feeling that invaders would be fair game; and also, that we should probably, by our act, save many innocent people from being slaughtered, or from receiving even worse treatment.

Perhaps one of the greatest anomalies in war is that the introduction of very deadly weapons appears to make a battle a less dangerous affair than when such simple articles as battle-axes or bows and arrows were the most destructive arms. This may result from the same cause which makes two skilful pugilists frequently decide who is the better man without either of them receiving much punishment; while two chawbacons cannot have a 'set-to' without serious damages resulting to both parties. Advancement in the science of war would appear to render it unnecessary that two generals should enter upon such vulgar details as actually to kill each other's men. Almost all the principal movements and manœuvres of an army would be made under the fire of riflemen; consequently, the effective use of this arm might turn the tide either in the direction of victory or defeat, before the main bodies had commenced to engage.

We will now state to what points the attention of that individual should be directed who is desirous of becoming skilled in a weapon which ought to be considered the national arm, or who, in the event of his entering upon a warlike field, would be desirous that more than one bullet out of two hundred should prove to be effective. It is not, as too many appear to believe, the simple act of pulling a trigger and making a noise with a gun, which causes defeat to an enemy; it is the true calculation of line, elevation, and distance which may make one man, as far as shooting and killing are concerned, equal to ten others. Much more is required to make a good shot than is usually supposed. It is true that, after a short time, a man may be able to hit a target at a certain distance very frequently; but let even the locality be altered, and the state of weather changed, and he will find a great difference in his results. What sportsman has not found that his companion could shoot much better alone than in company? How frequently do we notice that the fear of a second shot causes us to miss our bird! When, however, our bird is a man, and he probably moving and possessed of a weapon, it is then that a man should be an expert marksman, and not when he has a simple target to fire at. It is a fact, therefore, that true shooting is as much the result of a moral training over the nerves, as a physical one over the weapon.

The mere average soldier must be an indifferent marksman, and unless more time and trouble be taken with his training, the full power of the present improved weapons will not be shewn forth. Above all things, 'practice' must be had, and practice under, if possible, trying circumstances. The rifleman must be taught never to throw away a shot, and also, that the great secret in shooting is to be calm, and to hold the weapon truly just at the instant that the cock strikes the cap; for it is impossible to *maintain* an aim. It is but an instant that the rifle points truly; at that instant the cock must strike the cap. We have watched many hundred novices, and even expert marksmen, and the usual cause of failure we have found to be, that whilst the nerves have been moved to pull the trigger, then instantly has the muzzle been slightly elevated or depressed—a short distance, it is true—say only the $\frac{1}{10}$th of an inch; but if the barrel be thirty inches long, and the distance 300 yards, this is sufficient to make the bullet miss its man by a full yard.

Where it is possible, a rest should be obtained for the rifle; and a very simple one is obtained by grasping the ramrod firmly with the left hand, placing the ramrod on the ground vertically, and resting the rifle upon the upper part of the hand. Where any hedge, tree, or other object permits, a rest should be obtained, and much better shots can then be made. This applies to what we may call steady shooting; but there is another kind, which is much better known to the sportsman than to the soldier, and which we may call 'from-eye-to-hand shooting.' When soldiers are taught to shoot, they are usually directed to shut the left eye. This is perhaps necessary for long and steady shots such as those at a target; but for closer and more difficult shooting, the eye should not be closed. Let an individual who has had experience in rabbit, snipe, or buck shooting think how his most deadly shots have been made, and he will undoubtedly say 'with both eyes open,' and not looking along the gun, but straight at the object.

It may be doubted whether, considering the weapons, we are yet as perfect in the use of the rifle as our forefathers were with the cloth-yard shaft. Most of us have used the bow and arrow, and all, probably, thrown a stone or ball. In both these cases, we work from 'hand to eye;' the eye directs, and the hand obeys, not by casting the stone or the arrow in a direct line from the eye to the object, but from the hand to the object. It is in this description of shooting that Englishmen excel all other nations, and it would be in this, in a smart affair at close quarters, that Englishmen would be victorious.

To enable a man to shoot well and with rapidity, it is also necessary that *his gun should fit him;* the stock which suits the length of arm of one man may be very inconvenient for another; and it is only in quick shooting that we can tell how our stock does fit us.

When an individual totally unaccustomed to firearms is desirous of becoming an expert marksman, he should, upon procuring a weapon, seek every opportunity to carry it about with him, and to handle it. The rifle ought to be, as it were, part and parcel of ourselves; we ought to feel awkward without it, and we should frequently practise bringing it up to our shoulder, turning sharp to the right or left, and at the same time pressing it so well against the shoulder that we might fire a shot instantly. Very good practice may be had with merely blowing out candles with a percussion-cap and no powder. The candles may be placed in a room large enough to enable us to move about; then, by turning and wheeling quickly, we may obtain some expertness in a species of snap-shooting. Even the snapping of a cap will help us to stand steady and without winking when we pull the trigger. The greatest attention should also be paid to placing the feet firmly on the ground, so that the body is perfectly steady; the left foot ought to be advanced nearly three feet, and the toes should point towards the object aimed at; the toes of the right foot ought to point at right angles to the direction of the others; the body steadily supported by the two legs, the weight being neither entirely on the one nor on the other. Many a man has missed his mark in consequence of not standing his ground firmly. When walking over rough ground, or after running some distance, it requires practice to enable a man to pull up, stand firm, and make a good shot at once. Nothing but the perpetual handling of the weapon, and the confidence which a man thus gains, can ever qualify him to be an able and practical rifleman.

To throw a bullet some 1400 yards into a mass of troops is no great achievement, and it is an occupation which a rifleman is not likely to enjoy often or with impunity. An enemy would possess riflemen also, would immediately launch them against those attacking him, and then would come the advantage of the quick hand and the true eye; for if a party of skirmishers should be driven in, or, as they ought to be, exterminated, the first blow would be gained; the attention of the riflemen might then be turned to picking off the artillerymen or preventing the formation of bodies of troops; but to gain first blood would certainly be the good-fortune of those who could load and fire the quickest, aim the truest, and obtain for themselves the best cover.

One principal point to which the rifleman should pay attention is the effect which the wind has over his bullet, and consequently how much he ought to allow for a cross wind. In long distances, this allowance would be something considerable.

Too much care cannot be taken of the rifle and of the ammunition, and also of the loading of the weapon. Before loading, a little loose powder ought to be exploded with a cap, to insure the barrels and nipples being clear. Then load with powder and ball, taking care that the bullet is well pressed home. The capping should be the last process, every care being taken that the caps fit well, and are not likely to be knocked off. On all occasions, after the rifle has been loaded, the hammer ought to be at 'half-cock;' and when passing through woods, or climbing over hedges, &c., it would be advisable, if *certain* that no enemy was near, to uncap the rifle. Anyway, an occasional look at the hammer should be given, to observe if by chance it had been dragged to the full-cock. Too much precaution cannot be used in these matters. Even amongst experienced sportsmen, scarcely a season passes but we hear of some unfortunate individual either killed or maimed by his friend and shooting companion. An accident is much more likely to happen amongst those who have not been accustomed to carry dangerous weapons. There is also a habit to which some individuals, whose intellectual faculties are dormant, are very much given, of trifling with firearms. We have frequently seen, at ball-practice amongst the men, some two or three of the rear-rank calmly standing gazing about them with their weapons loaded and at full-cock. Without referring to the probability of immediate accidents, let us tell what might, and probably would result *on service* from such an apparent trifle.

A party of one hundred of the enemy are stationed in a village where they never dream of being attacked. It is true that soldiers ever are on the alert; and these men have their sentries placed, and all arranged to guard against surprise.

There is, however, one side of the village to which an approach might be made unobserved; and an able campaigner has from a neighbouring hill noted this.

Now for volunteers. One hundred of the enemy are in the village of ——; who will volunteer to cut them off at daybreak to-morrow? Eighty men at once step forth as willing and anxious. All is arranged. The party, covered by night, will approach to within two or three hundred yards of the village; they will then enter a water-course, and at daylight, will creep towards the village; and then for a rush. The most perfect silence is enforced, for a word above a whisper, and all might be lost. Now the party are concealed within two hundred yards of the village, and the light is just beginning to appear. One or two sounds have alarmed the attacking-party, some of whom have cocked their rifles to be in readiness. One volunteer, whom we will call Mr Smith, forgets to uncock his rifle. Now it is time to creep forward one hundred and fifty yards more, and then a surprise, that great worker of miracles, will be accomplished. The words are whispered 'Move on;' each man grasps his weapon, and with head low, stealthily proceeds. Suddenly, from the midst of the party, comes the report of a rifle, and high in the air is the whir of the harmless bullet. 'What is it?' 'What's to be done?' are the questions. No time to think; so 'Charge on them' is the word, and up jump the eighty volunteers to rush upon the village; but they are a hundred or two yards from it; and men of war are quick to assemble when danger is expected. Before, therefore, the eighty braves have entered the village, they are saluted by a volley from fifty rifles, which droops some thirty men. A scattered fire answers the volley, and a good English cheer; but two to one are long odds, and only half a dozen of the brave eighty return to tell the tale of the failure. 'How did it happen?' would be asked. 'What a failure;' 'What an unfortunate plan,' would be remarked. Few would ever know the real cause of failure; for the result is generally enough for most people. Let *us* take the liberty to ascertain, and we discover that it was merely a bramble caught the trigger of Mr Smith's rifle, he having forgotten to uncock it in his eagerness. That was all. No fault of Mr Smith's; only an accident.

Now, let us ask those who have had to do with these matters, whether, in their own experience, they have not known many similar cases. An Indian, a Caffre, or a Hottentot would never make such a mistake. These *accidents* usually take place amongst those whose lives have been passed in what is called civilisation, and who are too often indisposed to pay sufficient attention to what they consider trifling matters.

Every care should be taken to keep the rifle from wet or damp, when the weapon is likely to be required for use. After it has been loaded for some time, the old caps should be taken off, the nipples pricked, fresh, fine grain-powder poured into the nipple, and new caps put on. If we have any doubt about whether or not our weapon would explode when we pull the trigger, we never fire with the confidence which we ought. When an opportunity offers, and we have carried a loaded weapon for some time, we should try with the ramrod whether the bullet be well 'home.' If there be any distance between the bullet and the powder, or the charge become displaced, either the bursting of the barrel, or a misfire, might result. In short, a rifleman ought to take as much care of his rifle as of his child.

The principal points to which attention should be given with regard to the rifle are: 1. To be able to handle it freely; 2. To be able to shoot with it truly; 3. Always to have it in working-order, and ready for immediate use. Care must of course be taken that the ammunition and caps are preserved dry. A rifleman with damp ammunition and non-explosive caps, is but a poor defender of his hearth and home.

To judge distance accurately, practice is essential. There are a number of set rules by which a man is supposed to be able to tell at what distance an object is from him. We can merely remark, that however good these rules may be in theory, they certainly are not very available in practice. There are some matters to which there is no royal road, and judging distance is one of these. Each man must make for himself his scale by which to judge. There are, however, methods of proceeding in teaching one's self, which, if unacquainted with, we may waste much time; a few hints, therefore, upon the subject of judging distance may be useful.

In the school of musketry, men are taught to estimate the distance of a man by taking note of the size and appearance of objects at certain known distances; an individual is taught to observe what difference he discerns in the appearance of men at the several distances, taking into account the position of the sun, the state of the atmosphere, &c. At certain distances the features may be distinguished; at others, the colour of the clothes; and so on. This is a great step, and in the right direction; for what is the use of possessing a weapon which will, when given the proper elevation, strike an object at 1000 yards' distance, when the holder of that weapon knows not whether the object be at 700 or 1400 yards!

From our own experience, we have found the estimation of distance by means of the 'man-scale,' as it may be called, somewhat fallacious in practice, especially when the ground is very hilly, or when a deep ravine was between us and the object. The most accurate method we have found to be to calculate by hundreds of yards. We can, without any considerable error, estimate 50 yards, for we may throw a stone, or employ any simple method to obtain accurately this distance. Few men who have ever played cricket fail in judging immediately whether the wickets are at a greater or less distance than 22 yards. If, then, we fix upon any part of the ground in our front as at the distance of 22 yards, then double this distance, and add 6 yards more, the 50 yards can be estimated to within a very little. Take, again, another distance equal to this 50, and we have 100 yards. When we are merely taking a walk in the country, we may, by estimating first, and pacing afterwards, become, in two hours, expert judges of 100 yards. When we can estimate that, we have accomplished much, for we can make steps, as it were, of 100 yards each towards an object the distance of which is required, and we shall soon find that we can work up to 700 or 800 yards without any very considerable error. We can compare this method of proceeding with the 'man-scale' method, and after giving each a fair trial, find which gives the best result; we may also keep the one as a check against the other. For longer distances, such as from 1000 to 2000 yards, we shall find both plans convenient; but in a country such as England, the ordnance maps are of the greatest convenience. If the commander of a party of volunteers were, as he ought to be, provided with a map, he could give the distances of the various roads, buildings, &c., as a guide to his men. When riflemen take up a position which they mean to hold, it is not a bad plan to place split sticks, in which is a piece of paper, at distances of 100 yards, in the direction by which an enemy is expected to approach: these should be visible from the position, and will aid the marksmen. They are not likely to be of any service to the enemy, who would probably not observe them; or if he did, would not know for what purpose they were so arranged. Sometimes it may be found useful to have some marks made on a piece of wood to indicate what size a man at various distances assumes upon it, the wood being held at arms-length.

The velocity at which sound travels is 1140 feet per second, and the knowledge of this enables us to judge distances. Should a gun be fired at us, we may count the seconds, by means of a watch, between the flash and the report. If we have no watch, we may beat time by whistling a quick march, and then multiply the number of beats by 210; the product will be a close approximation in yards to the distance of the object.

As it is difficult to estimate the fraction of a second, we use here round numbers, so as to be enabled to multiply *vivâ voce* without difficulty.

If we counted 12 between the flash and report, then 210 × 12 = 2520 yards, for the distance: 21 being the coming-of-age period, is easily remembered. It is not always the amount of knowledge which we may possess that is so very useful, but it is the bringing of our knowledge to market at the right time.

We would again point out that even to judge distance accurately, will make a rifleman more efficient than the knowledge of a variety of military manœuvres.

Practice and self-confidence will, as in shooting, be the only roads to proficiency in this matter. But when we see how various are the opportunities of gaining practice in these matters, and how these are neglected, we naturally meditate and feel surprised at the trifling objects which appear to so totally engross the minds of even professional soldiers.

A ROUND-ABOUT STORY.

I HAD good and sufficient reasons for accompanying Jones and his sister last long vacation on their continental tour. What they were, I decline confiding to any bosom but my own; nor, indeed, have they any bearing on the following pages. I also decline entering into any particulars with any person or persons as to my reasons for abruptly quitting them at Cologne, when we had been but ten days together, and on the very evening following that on which Guy Plantagenet of the 14th Penny Royals joined us. At that city, our routes in life diverged. They were bound, forsooth, to the baths, to mingle with the empty, giddy throng of fashion, here, there, and everywhere—to dance and play the fool in any open booth of Vanity Fair! Bah! I had thought better of them. For me, I wanted to be alone with nature—to beard the lion in his lair, to climb the eagle's eyrie, to breast the floods—above all, to walk fiercely straight on anywhere.

In this peculiar frame of mind, which I am now at a loss to comprehend, I need not say that all those travelling elegances which I had bought for the occasion became worse than useless; so, leaving all my *impedimenta* in care of the good landlord of the Three Kings, I slung my knapsack over my shoulders, pulled my cap over my brows, took my staff in my hand, and strode off into the gathering shades. Now you can understand how it was that some time afterwards I entered Strasbourg dull, dusty, and travel-soiled, with my head throbbing to bursting, and a burning fever raging in my veins.

Have you ever been in Strasbourg? But, indeed, you might know it well without remembering the *auberge* dignified by the title of 'the Hôtel de l'Ecu.' It has fallen from its first estate, which was doubtless that of some well-to-do burgher, when the town flourished as an imperial city of the German empire; and going down a graduated scale of changing fortune, has at last settled into a house where the better class of journeymen drop in after the labour of the day to smoke the pipe of peace over black beer, or *schnapps*, and where the student or workman may sojourn for the night, and refresh themselves as they go upon their way. It stands a little back from the quiet street, and is shaded pleasantly enough by a row of lime-trees, under which, as I approached, sat the national cap and blouse, as they might have done any time these two hundred years. I say 'national' advisedly, for do what you will with Strasbourg, you can never make it anything but German. From the tiles of the houses to the paving-stones, and from the broad-faced phlegmatic men to the flaxen-haired, funny little children that stand knitting in the doorways, all are positively and unmistakably—not French.

It all looked very pleasant after the sultry, dusty length of road that I had travelled—the long shadows cast by the trees, in which a faint breeze rustled; the open window of a chamber in the gable above, where a white curtain suggested sweet repose; the group of smokers upon the benches without, indulging in the *dolce far niente* of the north; a pleasant matron, who stood upon the threshold with a small bundle of humanity in her arms: all this, I say, told me at a glance that I need proceed no further. It was indeed fortunate for me that I was brought to a halt in such comfortable quarters, for it was August when I went to bed, and October when I got up. There I lay with the fever-weight upon me, not able even to tell my name, raving in a strange tongue, and at the mercy of those around me.

I awoke with a consciousness of weakness, which, as I lay there so still, was not altogether distressing. I could only look round very slowly at one thing at a time, and did not, even at first, feel wonder where I was. I was aware of sunshine coming in through the half-closed blind, and of everything being very white, and neat, and orderly; so, by degrees carrying my languid glance around, it arrived and rested upon a figure, whereupon I began to ruminate. It was so still and placid as it sat there, with the sunshine upon it, that dimly upon my weakened mind it suggested strange fancies. 'Perhaps,' said I, 'I am asleep, and that strange thing is a dream—a recollection of some picture I have seen long ago; or perhaps it is a picture that I look at; or perhaps I am dead. I cannot move. I am certainly dead, and there sits the angel of the tomb.' She was decidedly not got up in the approved costume of the seraphic host, for she was but a woman of some thirty-five or forty years, habited in the black dress of a religious order, who sat there at her sewing; but there was something so calm and saintly about her face, and so placid, even to monotony, about the movements of her long white fingers, that her whole appearance favoured the idea of holy repose, rather than conveyed the energy of real life. So I watched and waited—I was too weak for impatience—for her to look up, and still, like some ingenious automaton, she plied her busy fingers. The first break was when she rounded some corner of her work, which must have been a passage of import, for, first of all it had to be adjusted with pins, and then trimmed with scissors, and then tacked with a long thread. It was altogether evidently a piece of fine and delicate mechanism, and afforded me intense pleasure to observe. There was, to begin with, the coaxing the thread into the needle, which was no easy matter, I can tell you; for it first of all clumsily and bluntly would not enter, until subjected to a vast amount of knowing discipline between the finger and thumb of its mistress; and then, when it had absolutely taken a minute possession, and she thought she had it all her own way, it obstinately refused to budge an inch in either direction, in a manner that would have tried the temper of any sempstress on record, Penelope herself included; and at last, when she had given it up in despair, as if mollified by the good temper and perseverance of its wielder, it suddenly relaxed and resigned itself to the duties of life with an exemplary repentance.

At this particular time, and during the next few minutes, there was a sense of importance, and an anxiety upon the countenance of my guardian angel, which assured me she was at some critical point; so it was with a feeling of relief that I saw the pinched-in lips expand, the compressed brow relax, and the garment held out at arm's-length, as if she now might pause to contemplate the effect, and allow herself the enjoyment of her skill. Indeed, now that the difficulty was mastered, and that the tension of my sympathies was loosened, I could not myself repress a long sigh of relief. In an instant, the work was cast aside, and the *béguine* by my pillow, her kind eyes looking into mine.

'Monsieur is better,' said she, with her cool fingers upon my wrist. Now, I fear the recollection of all the good-breeding wherein I had been nurtured must have entirely deserted me on this emergency, for the words in which my reply was couched came forth in my pipy, shaky voice, in a phrase of the metropolitan *gamin*—'Who are you?' However, perhaps, after all, it did not much matter, seeing that I spoke English, whereas she used a French *patois*, and that universal language which a woman's tone, and look, and gentle hand conveys all over the world to her sick charge.

But I will not detain you in my invalid chamber, where good Sister Josephine kept me company until she fairly set me up on my legs, thin and trembling though they were. We had many a talk and argument about things that perhaps I had no business to suggest to the quiet little woman. I somehow did not quite believe in her happiness, and wanted to bring her to confess that she was trying to cheat herself. I have since thought this was both ungracious and ungrateful; but she always smiled in the same way, and shook her head as she said she wished 'Monsieur was as happy in his heart.' Then—confound me for a blockhead!—what had I to do with the pope and the council of Trent? or Luther and the Huguenots? or why should I have been such a hard-hearted heathen as to laugh at her little relic of a bit of the wood of the true cross which she wore at her breast?

'Josephine,' said I, 'do you know, you silly woman, there's enough of that in the relics of your church to build a man-of-war?'

'*Eh bien,*' said she, with a little shrug; 'and may not *le bon Dieu* make for that a miracle as for the loaves and fish?'

But she took it all in good part, only, I believe, praying the more earnestly for my conversion to her faith. Nor had we ever a shadow of a difference until one day, when I was laughing at the laws and restrictions of her order. 'Why,' said I, ''tis a shame to make a nun of such a dear, kind, clever creature as you. You ought to have had your own bright home, and your fine husband sitting by your hearth, with your children around his knees; perhaps one nearly as big and tiresome as this idle fellow here that you have been such a good mother to!' As I saw the bright colour rush over her face, succeeded by a pallor like that of death, I would have given worlds to recall the unkind, thoughtless words; but the discipline of years told, and she, with a little shiver, settled down into her ordinary serenity. I stammered out a few words, to which she only replied with her usual, 'Monsieur is very good;' and so it all ended, except that that night, when she thought I slept, she addressed herself to her beads long and earnestly. I afterwards heard from my landlady poor sister Josephine's cruel story; but this is no place for it.

I had finished my chicken with a voracity that made even my good nurse smile to see; the hearth, for it was an open fireplace, was swept, and the afternoon log burnt brightly. I had done all sorts of wonderful things that day: had written to my friends; had gone over all my bills; had found, on examination of the contents of my pocket, that I was just short of the demands upon me by three hundred and ten francs, six centimes. I could get money by allowing for the delay in writing for it, but I wanted it immediately; that is to say, my host, who was but a poor man, wanted it immediately, and I myself was all impatience to buy a heap of things—presents for the good woman and the children below, and something '*pour les pauvres*,' as Josephine said, with her imploring eyes. It was no use to give her anything for herself; in fact, she was the only woman I have ever known, young or old, proof against the temptation of a bonnet—perhaps because she didn't wear one. So I was all anxiety to get into funds at once, and bethought me of consulting my friend.

'Josephine, you dear old soul!' said I, 'what am I to do for money?'

'*Pour l'argent!* Has not monsieur enough to pay?'

'No, indeed; monsieur owes three hundred and ten francs, six centimes. Monsieur must go to prison.'

'*Comment!* to prison! Has not, then, monsieur money in his home? Are not *les bons Anglais* very rich?'

'O yes, Josephine, plenty of money at home, but that's not here. Is there any man of business, a banker, a Jew—any one that I could explain to?'

She brightened up in an instant.

'O yes; there was Monsieur Fritz Lenoir, Sans Chasseur, in the Rue St Dominique; he was good man—very—good to the poor.'

This was always her standard of excellence. So it was arranged that the next day I, being now comparatively strong and able-bodied, should call upon Monsieur Fritz, and explain to him all that was so unintelligible to the good woman.

My toilet, on this important occasion, took a long time, and was carried on by instalments from breakfast to luncheon, for it was the first time I had been abroad since my illness. Notwithstanding all Josephine's flannels and wraps, my clothes hung upon me much as they would depend from a peg in a wardrobe, and had a strange airy feel about them, as if they had belonged to somebody else; even my shoes had become too large; and my cap slid down over my eyes. It was what poor Hood would have called 'a skeleton suit.' When it was all accomplished, she brought me over the little mirror to contemplate the effect, in which she evidently took no little pride. '*Regardez*,' said she. I had not seen myself before, and certainly required some stronger identification than that of recognition, for, after examining my lineaments with curious interest for some minutes, I felt impelled to laugh at the strange, white, hollow face, and was then as irresistibly inclined to cry. I think this latter attack of weakness came on me with the thought of home. I do not mean my wretched bachelor lodgings, but that place which mother and sisters make home to a man, even long after he has gray hairs, and his own roof-tree above him.

Behold me, then, fortified by some wonderful cordial condiment which was only to be partaken of at the last moment of setting forth, wrapped in a fine red woollen shawl of madam's, and supported by a stick, walking slowly down the sunny side of the street, until very warm, and in a great tremble, I, according to my instructions, arrive at a high garden-wall, and knock at a gate on which is inscribed the legend, 'Bureau, M. Fritz Lenoir.' My summons was replied to by a little flaxen-haired maiden, who informed me, in a hybrid tongue, that 'Monsieur was busy, and could not see strangers: this was not his day for business.'

'But,' said I, as much from the desperation of wanting to sit down as anything, 'I must see him. I have come on particular business; I cannot come again.'

While we were thus arguing, I had advanced through the half-opened door, and found myself in the neatest and brightest of gardens, at the extremity of which a little fat man walked, smoking his pipe amongst his flowers, with the air of a master who is well to do in the world.

'Very well; he is there,' said the blue petticoat, sulkily leaving me to make my way, and state my case for myself.

It is an awkward thing to introduce one's self, still more so for the purpose of asking a favour, and most of all, when even your resources of physical support under the emergency are gone. It was an unpleasant position enough; indeed, in every way he held me at vantage, for instead of advancing to meet me, he kept his ground with the utmost nonchalance, now stooping to pluck up a weed or admire a flower, without evidencing any consciousness of my approach. This was far from encouraging; and fancying that my companion's instinct warned him of the nature of my errand, I fell, as a matter of course, into the sheepishness of a petitioner.

'Ehem!' said I at his elbow.

He turned, and without removing his pipe, nodded gravely.

'I have come, monsieur, from the Hôtel de l'Ecu. I live there; at least, I have been there for some time. I have been very ill, away from my friends. I am an Englishman. Sister Josephine, from the convent of St Catherine, who nursed me, has told me you are a man of business.' (I paused between each of my sentences, hoping he would help me out; but his share in the conversation was confined to a slight elevation of the eyebrows, and a puff.) 'I am expecting remittances from England; but in the meantime require an advance. Understanding you, monsieur, to be in this way, I have called to make the proposition.'

I had now finished my speech, and had nothing more to say.

With the utmost deliberation, the pipe was removed, its ash knocked out, and his broad brown hand, with slow imperturbability, smoothed down his beard. 'You want money,' at last said the oracle, not making any interrogation, but laying it down as a satisfactory demonstration, in a deep gruff voice.

'I do.'

'How much?'

'Five hundred francs.'

'Where are the securities?'

'The security—well, it is personal security; but I only require a temporary advance—at the furthest, for a fortnight.'

All this time, my companion had been examining me from behind the pipe he had resumed, at first somewhat suspiciously, but afterwards with a sort of grim, stolid pity, as he contemplated the personal security of my wasted figure.

'You are very weak,' said he, in the same oracular tone; 'you shall come into my house, and take a cordial. I know what is right.'

There was no disputing the fact of his correct judgment, for, another moment, and I verily believe I should have fainted. Everything was turning round; the flowers had all mixed into an indistinguishable mass. I had barely consciousness left to totter after him into the house, and drink something that was held to me. 'You should be in bed. Aha! I know what is right.'

I was now able to look about me, and saw that I was in a large and handsome apartment, which, at a glance, told of substantial comfort, and which was occupied by a very old woman sitting beside the fire. 'That's my mother,' said Monsieur Fritz, following the direction of my eyes; 'she is ninety years old. She is a wonderful woman. Aha! she has her wits about her, I can tell you; talks just like a book, only easier to understand.' The old lady, who had been in a sort of doze, intuitively comprehending that her cue was come, here roused herself, and looked at me and at her son alternately, as if demanding some explanation of my presence. 'It is an Englishman, mother,' said my host; 'he is very ill, and rests here before he goes on his way. I have given him some of Gretchen's bottle to comfort him.'

'Poor child,' said the old lady, talking to herself; 'he is very thin and white. Fritz was right—Fritz is always right—Gretchen's bottle was right. And so young, poor child! Can you speak French, sir?'

This was said with bland politeness, in perfect unconsciousness that I had overheard the soliloquy.

'Yes, madame, and I am happy that it thus affords me the opportunity of making my compliments to so charming an old lady.'

'Monsieur does not speak like an Englishman. (*Aside:* He is very well-bred.) Ah, sir, if you had seen me in my young days, you would have said to me fine things. The young men said to me: "Mademoiselle, you are a rose and a pearl." Ah, they were very polite then! But I am now an old woman, sir; I am ninety. I am of no use to any one but my little boy, Fritz: he is a very good child—he will miss me when I am gone.'

He was standing close beside her chair, a little thickset, squat, elderly man, sheepishly enough, to hear himself commended, as he might have done any time these fifty years; but, somehow, the effect was not ludicrous; it did not even become so when the old lady, roused to a sense of some imaginary wrongs, began to bemoan herself, and commenced crying over her grievances. It was an awkward position for a stranger. I gathered myself up, and rose to depart, but in an instant, her sense of hospitality was touched. 'Do not go yet, sir,' said she; 'rest yourself; you seem to be very weak: give him another glass of Gretchen's bottle, Fritz. Gretchen was little Fritz's nurse, sir. She has been dead a great many years: we must all die; but she was a young woman—she was not seventy. We were girls together when I was like that—not a poor, old, helpless woman, sir, an incumbrance to every one.'

The 'that,' accompanied by an indication of the shaky head, pointed my attention to a picture I had already observed hanging above the fire. It was but a poor performance, in point of art; but what it wanted in that respect was made up for by the extent of canvas covered, the brilliancy of the hues employed, and by the real interest and beauty of the subject, which not even the artist had been able to obliterate. A young girl of extreme beauty was represented habited in a costume of the last century, standing in a grove of trees, and holding a shoe and stocking, while one foot was bare. The painter had gone bravely to work upon the principle of strong contrast and no middle tints, while utterly ignoring the received notions of perspective. Thus, the background was one green mass mapped out into leaves like a wall-paper, against which the bright-red petticoat and blue sash came out with the most admirable disregard for rules. Look where you would in the room, you could never lose sight of it: turn your back boldly, and lo! it arose in a mirror at the opposite side. No wonder I should have noticed it!

'That is my portrait,' said the old woman; 'done in the year '82, by the celebrated Herr Grumbleblitz.'

'Wonderful colouring,' said Monsieur Fritz. 'Aha! I am a judge of pictures.'

Here was a chance for my money; I could compliment the whole family of the Lenoirs at a breath. I became riveted before it with delight. I advanced a step—then retreated—assumed the true connoisseur bearing of my head to one side—discovered an imaginary fault, and frowned—saw my error, and smiled—at length ventured to speak.

'A most remarkable work.'

All this time Madame Lenoir had been, with the greatest satisfaction, and the most lively interest, examining it herself, while her son was gravely contemplating the effect upon my face.

'A truly remarkable work!' I repeated. 'Such breadth! such gorgeous colouring! such handling! such a subject!'

'Thank you, sir,' said the old woman. 'Yes, it was very like me; you would not think so now, but it was. Herr Grumbleblitz took great trouble about it; he was two years living with us while he painted it. Poor man, he is dead; but he has great fame. Ah! it is a curious story.'

She was evidently on thorns until she secured a new listener, an event now, I suppose, in her monotonous way of life, and Monsieur Fritz afforded her the amusement.

'My mother will tell you about it,' said he. 'I will come again. You shall rest. Aha! I know what is good for sick people.'

So saying, and recommending me to the old lady's attention by a jerk of his pipe, he left us together, and betook himself to the smooth gravel-walk, where we could see him pacing amongst his flowers, with a grave contemplative air, worthy of the individual who knew so well what was right. Madame had brightened up amazingly—had become quite vivacious.

'Oh, monsieur does not care to hear an old woman's stupid story; perhaps it would not interest him.'

'Indeed, madame, I am all anxiety. I hope madame's great kindness will not disappoint me.'

'Well, sir, as you so much wish, you shall hear. I was born in this town, and have always lived in it. I was married to a townsman, and here my son Fritz was born. I hope I shall die in it, and be buried with my friends. My father was a very respectable man, and a member of the town-council. I remember, as a child, his going to the *mairie* in his scarlet gown, all trimmed with fur, and wearing his fine gold chain. He was a great linen-weaver, and used to employ whole families, and was thought to be a rich man. People in those days were more prudent than they are now, sir. My father used himself to work at the loom; and my mother would go about the house from morning till night, without thinking of fine clothes or company, except on Sundays and holidays, when she went abroad with my father. I was the youngest of their children, and was born when they were elderly people, so I was a great darling; the others had all died, except one son, who was years older than I. My brother was at the same trade with my father; but he was a wild thoughtless fellow, and got amongst a fine gay set, who taught him to look down upon his business and his home; he would absent himself for weeks together, and then come back, sulkily refusing to say a word of explanation. My parents tried all methods with him, but anger or kindness was just the same, and we lived in perpetual misery and fear: indeed, I am sure that his wicked, reckless conduct broke my poor mother's heart, for she took to her bed and died without any particular complaint. What with her loss, and Albert's disobedience, my father was a great deal broken, and was obliged to neglect his affairs, which soon fell into disorder, although he always kept up the credit of his ancestors; and the neighbours would sooner have trusted to him than to a bank full of money. He doted on me, notwithstanding I was but a silly girl, with my head stuffed full of my own beauty, and all my lovers—for I was very handsome, sir. They used to say I was the prettiest maid in all Strasbourg; and when any new officer came to the garrison, they always made some excuse to come to the house to see me. I did not care for any of them; but I used to like to see their fine coats come down the street, and to hear the jingling of their spurs on the pavement, because of our neighbour opposite, the notary's son, who had been my playfellow, and who used, I knew, to sit behind the blind at his desk, watching every one that came in and out. When we were children, the neighbours said that we should one day be married; but as we grew up, he became shy, and I used to laugh at him, so that we were not very good friends, and I liked to tease him better than anything else in the world. I was now a young woman, but very thoughtless and gay, and still I loved my father dearly, and tried to make him forget his trouble about Albert, who was just as bad as ever.

'I was sitting one day at the open window, singing at my work, just to vex Carl, when my father came in, looking so sorrowful, that I knew directly something was the matter. "Elizabeth, my child," said he, "we are ruined—our good name is gone, and we shall be a by-word and disgrace in the place where we were born. It is well that your poor mother did not live to see this day." It is no good for me to trouble you with a long story, so I will only say that my wicked brother had brought this new sorrow upon us. He had been going on in a desperate way of extravagance for a long time, and taking advantage of my father's age and weakness in every way, but he had never done so bad a deed as this before. The way of it was this, sir: My father had a large sum of money belonging to his guild in his hands, and Albert had, by forging his name, got it from the bank, and gone off with it, no one knew where. This money would be demanded on a certain day about a month distant, and our good honest reputation for ever forfeited if it could not be produced; for no one would believe, said my father, from the state of his own affairs, that he did not know all about it from the first. Well, sir, we cried, and talked, and thought of everything; but the only hope we could fix on was, that a sister of my father's, who was a rich widow, living in Paris, might lend it to us, for the sake of the family. We none of us knew much about her, but it was the last chance; so, after a great many plans, it was settled that I should set off by the diligence next morning, and go to her. It was not the fashion then to trust much to the post, for we used to get letters very seldom, and people always did their business themselves, although journeys were long and dangerous, and not taken except for very important reasons. It was a great undertaking for a young creature who had never been outside her own town; but there was no help for it, as my father could not possibly go; besides, I had plenty of spirit, and, I suppose, rather liked the idea of the adventure. In a few hours after, my place was taken, my intended journey was noised abroad, and all the neighbours were full of curiosity about it. We said that I was going unexpectedly to see my aunt; but there was a vast deal of envy and spite amongst them. Poor Carl stood at his window, and walked up and down before the house all day, but I never noticed him; young girls are such silly things, sir, and never like a young man to know the truth. I only just nodded to him as I stood at the gate, and said: "Good-by, Carl; see what a fine husband I shall bring home from Paris."

'Well, I won't trouble you with all my adventures. I got to town very well, and found out my aunt, who was very glad to see me, and who would have liked me to stay with her all my life. I had a fine time. I saw the king's palace, and the poor queen—she that was afterwards beheaded—walking with her children in the gardens; and we went to the theatres, and saw all the grand sights; until at last it only wanted four days to the time when the money had to be paid, and the journey took three; so off I started in great joy, carrying the sum in bank-notes with me. At this time, the roads were extremely dangerous, being full of robbers. It was seldom that a diligence was not stopped on its way, and all travellers brought home stories of their dangers or escapes; so, to secure my treasure, my aunt and I settled that it would be better for me to place it between my foot and my stocking, where it would be never looked for, even in case of an attack. I was never much afraid of anything, and made very merry with the good lady's fears, but did as she desired, and set off. I made the sixth person in the *intérieur*. There was a priest going to Nancy; a young man and his sister going on to Strasbourg; a manufacturer; and an old Jew, who wrapped himself up in his pelisse, and seemed to sleep all the way. We soon got very chatty, and tried to frighten each other with stories of robbers and murders, and told of the ingenious way in which travellers had concealed their valuables. I, being young and giddy, as I have told you, and excited by the talk, which was very free and friendly, with great pride told of my little hoard, and where I carried it. I had scarcely said the words, when I felt I had been very foolish, for I saw the old man look round with a strange, sharp look, that somehow frightened me. Well, sir, we went on, stopping to dine and rest, and as friendly and merry a party we were as ever you saw, except the Jew, who kept to himself in his corner, listening to all our nonsense, but never saying a word.

'The priest's place at Nancy was taken by an officer going on to Strasbourg, and we went on happier than ever, until we passed through the town of Mogenvie, and found ourselves in the wild open country lying between that and Sarrebourg. As for me, I was so gay at the thought of being so near home, and making my poor father so happy, that I laughed and sang like a giddy child. It was now quite dark, and had become very wild, a strong wind blowing across the heath from the distant mountain. Suddenly, with a jerk, the horses were pulled up, and loud shouts and oaths told us our misfortune. We had scarcely time to think before the door was torn open, and we were dragged out. As for the officer who had talked exceedingly bravely, he never offered a resistance, but cried out for mercy. The young man who was with his sister fired his pistol; but it was of no use, for he was surrounded and disarmed in a moment. I was, as you may suppose, half-dead with terror, for we were completely at the mercy of these men, who dragged all the baggage down, and instantly began to ransack it: all our things were thrown into a heap, and they selected every article of value. The Jew was certainly a great disappointment to them, for all they found of his was a little valise containing some worthless clothes and a few Russian roubles. While they were threatening and swearing at him, a man rudely took my arm, and shaking me violently, demanded my money. "Leave the girl alone," said another of them; "how should a child like that have money?" I now began to experience a hope of escape, and ventured to look about me: they had taken out the horses, and were engaged in tying the traces round the old man's neck. Perhaps they were only trying to frighten him, or perhaps they were really savage from disappointment. But, O sir, it was a dreadful scene in the dark night, not knowing which of our turns might come next. At last he screamed out: "Stay, stay, and I will tell you, as I am a living man, where I have hid my money. The little girl carries it all, a great sum, under her stocking." In a moment, sir, they were roaring like wild beasts about me, and my shoe and stocking off. My poor money! I do not remember anything more until I came out of my faint, and found that we were again on our road. My heart was almost broken. I could do nothing but cry and think of my poor father. I think even the other passengers pitied me, although they had all had some loss, and, during the whole journey, never ceased to vent their indignation upon the old man. He never seemed to mind or hear a word that was said, and took leave of us all at Strasbourg with a humility that was almost insulting.

'I cannot tell you what a miserable return was mine. My poor father could only cry over me, and thank God that my life was spared to him; and poor Carl, that I was so unkind to, came running across, and wept like a little child, though he was a fine tall man—bigger than you, sir—when he heard of my escape. My heart was melted, and all my pride gone, and I was, in all my trouble, thankful to sit there in our little parlour, and feel his strong manly arm around my waist, and know that there was my dear husband that was to be. So, sir, we were all in the twilight, thinking sadly enough of to-morrow, yet happy in to-day, when a ring came at our gate. Our maid, Gretchen, that was afterwards Fritz's nurse, went out, but presently came running in to say that a man wanted to give me a letter, but must put it into my own hands. I was still very frightened and nervous, as you may suppose; but Carl coming with me, we went to the door, where stood the cause of my misfortunes, the old Jew. "It is for you, mademoiselle," said he, giving me a letter—"farewell." I was now all curiosity to find what he had to say to me, and could scarcely wait until I got the light. O sir, my joy, my delight! it contained these words: "Mademoiselle, never be hasty in judging any one. You doubtless think me a very bad man, because you know but one side of the story. You are, however, a good girl, for you did not yourself blame the old man for saving his life at the expense of your money. Know that I carried upon me jewels, one of which would have been a fortune. But for your indiscretion, I should have lost the hard labour of a life. I enclose, then, two orders for money which awaits you at the bank—one is for the sum you have lost, the other is a marriage-portion for so good and pretty a girl."

"That is yours," said I to Carl.

'We were married, sir, for I was now a great heiress, and my little son Fritz inherits that very fortune made from my wedding-dowry.'

For the benefit of the hypercritical, I add that I have taken a transcriber's privilege in compressing all that was extraneous and rambling in my heroine's manner of relating the foregoing story—a story we may all have heard as an anecdote, and upon the authentic source of which I had thus unexpectedly stumbled. It was decidedly a feather in my travelling cap—not perhaps entitling me to a niche in the temple of discoverers between Columbus and Captain Cook, but still a little isle of my own, which I here make patent for the benefit of all who, visiting Strasbourg, desire to see its curiosities. I have given you the address—you cannot miss it—and I am sure the old lady will be enchanted to tell you all about it herself.

I do not know whether, from long experience, M. Fritz had become so accurate in his computations, but certainly just as the story reached its conclusion, he entered. 'Now you understand the picture,' said he. 'Aha! no one can understand anything unless they are told.' I expressed my obligation to the old lady, who had relapsed into her dozey state after the exertion, and thanked monsieur for his hospitality. There was something evidently upon his mind. 'About the money,' said he; 'you see I am a man of business. I know what is right—personal security is not right. You should go home to bed. I will give you,' and he pulled out a leathern wallet—'twenty francs, and you can write to England: you ought to tell your friends you are weak and ill. Aha! I will come and see you.'

I need not say that I declined his proffered kindness as regarded the advance; but there was something about him, despite his oddity, at which I could not feel offended, so I thanked him, and said I should be glad to see him.

When I reached my temporary home, two surprises awaited me: a face that had leaned over my cradle watched for me from my window, and sister Josephine was gone.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

That science has its losses as well as gains was never more emphatically demonstrated than in the mournful event which took place soon after our last *Month* was written—the death of Humboldt. In him Europe has lost one of the foremost of her savans and philosophers, whose life, prolonged even to fourscore years and ten, presents us with an admirable example of scientific research and intellectual activity. He leaves a lasting monument in his works; and there is somewhat of consolation in the fact, that the concluding volume of his great work, *Cosmos*, is left so far complete that we may hope erelong to see the conclusion of the excellent English edition by Major-general Sabine. We hear, moreover, that a comprehensive geographical treatise has been found among the deceased philosopher's manuscripts; and should this be made ready for publication, a vast store of knowledge will be opened for studious readers.

Led hereby to geographical topics, we may no the well-attended dinner of the Geographical Socie in honour of Sir Roderick Murchison on his resig tion of the presidency of the Society. He is succe by the Earl of Ripon.—Accounts from the fa inform us of some of the results of Mr Co journey from the Baltic across the Russian te to the mouth of the Amoor. It appears that the river is navigable for a distance of 2600 miles, to a place which is within 300 miles of Irkoutsk, the capital of East Siberia; hence it affords means of communication and trade with Siberia, Northern China, Tatary, Mongolia, and other countries; and a company has been formed in St Petersburg to open a trade. They hope, at the same time, to promote a lively traffic across the ocean with San Francisco; and the imperial government, to afford them protection, has strongly fortified Nikolaieff, the city and port at the mouth of the Amoor.—Turning to our own possessions, we find the Honourable G. W. Allan, in his address to the Canadian Institute at Toronto, making known that a company had been 'chartered' with large powers by the provincial legislature to open a route across British America. As he explains, its course would be from Lake Superior to Red River Settlement—to Carleton House on the Saskatchewan—to Edmonton House at the head of the navigation of the same river—thence across the Rocky Mountains to the head waters of the Frazer River, and so down to British Columbia. This is a grand scheme; and if our Canadian cousins accomplish it, they will have all the praise they can desire, and profit too, for that highway, when finished, would be the direct route to China and Japan. And, besides, what a country lies between for colonisation! Doubts have for some time prevailed with respect to the agricultural capabilities of Red River territory; but Professor Hind, geologist of the exploring expedition, finds the summer temperature of the settlement there to be four degrees higher than at Toronto; that rains are abundant; and that the land is not ungenerous to the cultivator.—In Australia, there is a change to notice: Moreton Bay is now erected into a separate colony, with an understanding that it takes upon itself a portion of the public debt of New South Wales.

Mr Robert Mallet's catalogue of earthquakes may now be augmented by a tremendous item—the late earthquake that shook old Chimborazo to his base, and threw Quito, a city of 70,000 inhabitants, into a heap of ruins. Full particulars have not yet been received; but enough is known to make us aware that this earthquake is one of the most calamitous on record.

There is good news to report from the Red Sea: the telegraphic cable is successfully laid from Suez to Aden. Profiting by experience, the projectors have chosen their central wire seven times thicker than the wire of the Atlantic cable; and this will insure better conductibility. But a few months more, and we may expect to see London in direct telegraphic communication with Bombay; and what is very much to the purpose, we hear that our government have at last resolved to have a cable laid direct from Plymouth to Gibraltar. We shall then be able to communicate with our Eastern possessions, independently of all the wires and all the clerks on the continent, a result to be regarded with national satisfaction.—Meanwhile important experiments have been made on insulation and insulators; and Messrs Silver, of Silvertown, near North Woolwich, have recently demonstrated, to a numerous gathering of our leading chemists and electricians, that india-rubber is by far the best insulator at present known. By an ingenious process, they coat the wire with a homogeneous envelope of india-rubber, which, as proved by a ten years' experiment in Portsmouth harbour, loses none of its insulating property by long immersion in sea-water. It can be cut and re-spliced with great ease and rapidity; and the finished cable appears to combine the desiderata of successful telegraphy.

Information has reached us from India of a tree abundant in the forests of the Madras Presidency, which yields a milky juice similar in property to gutta-percha. The tree, which grows from eighty to a hundred feet high, is known as the Pauchontee: the juice becomes brittle when dry; but dissolved in turpentine or naphtha, it forms an insulating paste, which, under our new Indian régime, may become a source of profit. At present, these trees are cut down by thousands every year in clearing the ground for coffee-plantations. The same forests contain many oil-producing plants, which, as botanists shew, would well repay cultivation.

The Professor of Natural Philosophy at Maynooth, the Rev. N. J. Callan, well known for his ingenious and important electrical researches, has recently invented an induction coil, which, though not more than five inches long, gives off a spark of four inches. He is pursuing the investigation in the hope of arriving at a combination of short coils from which to draw sparks of twenty or twenty-four inches in length, even with a small battery. He shews that iron-wire, though inferior to copper, is suitable for secondary coils, and thinks it better to strive for the production of long sparks than the employment of a long wire.

Mr Wheatstone, as if by way of episode to his electrical pursuits, has just given another proof of his ingenuity by reading a manuscript in cipher which has long been in possession of the British Museum, and hitherto an undecipherable puzzle to all who examined it. The manuscript consists of a few pages of Arabic numerals, and, as now appears, is an important state document, expressed in French, embodying certain secret proposals from Charles I. to the court of Holland. When made public, as it probably will be, the student will see in it a further illustration of the Stuart character, and an interesting passage of history.

Sheets of paper and cardboard, with designs punctured therein, are often used by ladies in fancy-work, and very largely in weaving processes; and an ingenious Frenchman shews how these may be punctured by electricity. The sheet to be pierced is laid on a plate of metal, which is connected with one of the poles of a Ruhmkorff's coil: the operator takes a metallic style, insulated in a glass-holder, which is connected with the other pole, and following the design, brings the point near to, but not touching the paper; a spark immediately passes and effects the puncture. This is a pretty application of electricity to mechanical art; useful in the drawing-room as well as the workshop.

An improved axle-box for railway purposes has been described before the Institution of Civil Engineers by Mr Curtis, of which the merit consists in the fact that, by a centrifugal action, the oil is constantly thrown over the upper side of the axle, from the oil-chamber, to which it slowly trickles on its return, filtering on the way through a piece of flannel, which separates the impurities. This box has been for some time in use on eight railways in England, and in one instance, no fresh oil had been poured in for two months. Should it be found to answer, on further trial, we ought not to hear of trains stopping, as they now do, to give time for the axles to cool.

It has been remarked that the advance of engineering manufactures is shewn by the construction of the tools and appliances which they call into use; and we may form some notion of the huge masses of metal henceforth to be operated on in the red-hot state, by the fact, that a steam-hammer weighing seven tons, with a fall of six feet, has recently been made at Morison's Works, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The blow from a mass of solid steel of more than fifteen thousand pounds-weight, will be tremendous.—We hear of a machine that will clean twelve knives at once, and keep the edge in good condition: and of 'the renewable stocking,' which is to save wives and daughters the trouble of darning. According to the inventor, stockings are so cheap, that it does not pay to darn them, and he therefore manufactures toe and heel pieces, which are to be sewn in when required, and thus make the stocking as good as new.

Dyers and chemists will be glad to hear of new substances which they may turn to profit. Dr Hofmann has communicated a paper to the Royal Society, describing products which he obtains from the berry of the mountain-ash; one, to which he gives the name of sorbic acid, and its compounds.—Further experiments in Paris confirm the efficacy of koussou as a remedy against tape-worm.—Professor Nicklès has been at work upon the privet, *Ligustrum vulgare*, known as an oleaceous plant, bearing black berries, which in Belgium and Germany are called ink-berries. These he finds to contain glucose, raisin-sugar, and a waxy substance of a beautiful crimson colour, to which he gives the name of *liguline.* This makes a good dye in different shades of crimson and purple, and is available as a test for water. In a tumbler of pure distilled water, a drop of solution of liguline colours the whole a bright crimson; but if the water contains, as many drinking-waters do, carbonate of lime, then the colour changes to blue. The test may be applied as well with liguline paper as with the solution, and paper thus prepared will doubtless come into use, and prove of service to the traveller and scientific explorer. Liguline, moreover, promises to be useful to the optician, as the solution when viewed in glass tubes presents singular optical effects.

The Society of Arts repeat their advertisement of Sir Walter C. Trevelyan's prize of L.100, for the best essay on sea-weeds, that is, 'on applications of the marine algæ, and their products, as food or medicine for man and domestic animals—or for dyeing and other manufacturing purposes.'—The question is asked: Would the castor-oil plant, *Palma Christi*, grow in Australia? because, if it would, the colonists might find it profitable for cultivation. Experiments made in Algeria shew that its leaves are good food for silk-worms; that the oil can be deprived of its medicinal quality, and used in lighting and for alimentary purposes, and the fibres can be worked as hemp. Now that steam-communication along the rivers for hundreds of miles into the interior of Australia is established, and that produce may be sent to market, it is desirable that all suitable resources should be made available.—Another chemical product which we hear of from Paris is, *inocarpine*, derived from the chestnut of Tahiti—*Inocarpus edulis.* The sap of that tree exudes and forms a ruby-red gum on the bark; and this gum properly treated yields nine colours, from carmine, through green and blue, to black—further resources for dyers. A recommendation has been published in favour of raising plantations of this chestnut in Tahiti and the Society Islands; at present, in consequence of the leaves being used as fodder, the growth is diminishing.

At last, London has a market built with something like the style and appearance that a market should have in the metropolis: we refer to the New Flower Market adjoining the Opera House. However, apart from flowers, some of our provincial towns will still be able to boast that they have handsomer and more commodious market-houses than London. What can be uglier than Covent Garden, or more discordant with the magnificent fruits, vegetables, and flowers therein displayed? London must really try to beautify itself; the movement in favour of public drinking-fountains affords an opportunity for decoration which we hope will not be thrown away. And something must be done to facilitate locomotion through the streets, for at present the stoppages are as frequent as they are detrimental and vexatious.—There is talk of a line of Boulevards at Liverpool. When will the broad thoroughfare along the banks of the Thames be commenced? Considering that fifty-six million persons cross London Bridge in a year, is it not reasonable to argue that more thoroughfares are wanted?

Our learned bodies have now brought their sessions to a close; the Royal Society have held their annual election meeting, and elected fifteen out of thirty-six candidates to the dignity of F.R.S. Now—politics apart—talk runs most upon holidays and the preparations for the meeting of the British Association at Aberdeen.

Mr J. A. Barth of Leipzig announces his ability to furnish copies of 270 facial casts, which the Messrs Schlagentweit took from natives during their travels in India and High Asia. As a means of diffusing a knowledge of the ethnology of these countries, some of which had been visited by no other European travellers, the copies in question are attested as equally expressive and novel. They are formed on a basis of zinc, coated with a galvanoplastic deposit of copper, varied in colour according to nature, and giving the most minute irregularities of the skin in the greatest perfection. They cost, framed, about twenty-four shillings each.

A HOSPITAL HERO.

It was a cold night in December, and the wind blew along the slushy London streets; the blazing lights in the butchers' shops of Clare Market waved about like infernal banners. The policemen stood stiffly up in the doorways for shelter; and we, who were snugly ensconced in the house-surgeon's room of old St Barnabas, were perhaps the only people perfectly comfortable in the parish of St Clement Danes. Our party consisted of Brown (we'll *call* him Brown), of myself, and a small thin man called Jourdan. How small and fragile he looked as he sat on the arm of the old horsehair sofa discussing with Brown and myself a question in physiology. How red the spots grew over his cheek-bones; and how his cough rattled as he called Müller, and Kölliker, and Schroeder van der Kolk to witness that he was right, and we two signally and miserably wrong.

'Well, so be it,' said I at last. 'How the wind howls. It must matter but little to these poor neighbours of ours under the Adelphi arches whether their sensory nerve-fibres can be traced upward from the posterior columns of the cord or not. For my own part, I don't believe a'——

'What!' shrieked Jourdan, 'when Wagner has demonstrated that'——

'Oh, please sir,' said a nurse bouncing into the room, 'that man in the Top-Ward has got out of bed, and is a jumpin' mad.'

'Well, make him go back again.'

'I can't, sir. He's got the crutch from the patient in the next bed, and I daren't go near him.'

'Heigh-ho!' said Jourdan, 'it's always thus in our profession. We just taste occasionally the sweets of scientific discussion, when we have to leave them for the disgusting practical applications.'

Up stairs we went, past wards where the sufferers were most of them forgetting in sleep the distresses to which they would presently awake. All was quiet in the old hospital, save the howl of the wind and Jourdan's cough. 'Confound the pedantic little chap,' I thought to myself; 'he'll waken that operation case.' One more stair to climb, and we reached the Top-Ward, where there was unusual excitement, the patients sitting up in their beds; the poor fellow with heart-disease, the consumptive, the dropsical patient, all watching a tall stalwart figure standing in a flannel night-gown, with his back to the fire, leaning with his chin on a crutch, and evidently in deep thought. Directly he saw us, he shouldered the said piece of timber, if not to shew how fields were won, to give as good a representation as circumstances would allow of how he intended winning the field on the present occasion. Whisk came the handle over my head as I ducked and escaped the blow.

'My good man,' said Brown, 'now, do go into bed. Is there anything I'——

Whisk came the crutch again over our heads; and as we ducked, the maniac leaped rapidly past us from bed to bed, gained the door, and ere we had time to intercept him, was in the passage.

In the ceiling of the passage just outside this door was a trap which led out upon the roof; it was not far from the floor. With the activity of madness he leaped, caught the edge of the trap, swung himself up, and was upon the roof. We looked at each other.

'Here's a business,' says Brown; 'he'll be down into the street in a twinkling, for he'll never stand against this wind.'

'What a mess *we* shall get into!' was my selfish thought. We got a pair of steps, and getting up them, put our heads out of the trap. The moon was shining bright, but the wind was shrieking through the old stacks of chimneys; and now and then a tile detached would slide down the roof and drop into the street.

'By Jove,' says Brown, 'he must have fallen; I can't see him anywhere. Let me look. Ah, there! Good heavens! how could he have got there, right at the end of this pointed old roof, covered with slippery tiles?'

Across this, in the moonlight, we could see a long shadow, and what I at first took to be a chimney-stalk, was the madman, standing gazing on the moon. At each gust of the fierce wind his body swayed as though he would fall; but there he stood in all the sublimity and strength of mania, gazing at that planet whose supposed influence over such unfortunates as himself, has given its name to the most awful of maladies. What could we do? The nurses, the porters were assembled at the foot of the steps. Our feeling of responsibility was intensely painful. An exclamation, a sudden noise, might send that poor wretch tumbling into the street. What were we to do? I felt something push by me on the steps, and then, for the first time, noticed that Jourdan had rejoined us. A paroxysm of coughing had kept him below stairs when Brown and I hurried into the ward. I saw his eyes sparkling, and heard his rough breathing as the little fellow said: 'Hold these,' and put a pair of half-Wellingtons into my hand. Was *he* mad, too, taking off his boots in such a place?

'Why, Jourdan, what'——

'Hush!' said he as he raised himself through the trap and stood on the roof. We now saw he was going to seize the madman.

The latter, as I have said, was a tall stout man in a state of acute mania; our friend was diminutive, and his naturally small frame was wasted by disease. He got on the sharp apex of the sloping roof; a blast of wind came, and down he went, but he caught something, raised himself, and walked along, like one on a tight-rope.

The madman does not seem to notice him. We watch them both, and our hearts beat not only with anxiety but shame. The possibility of such a feat never had entered our own imaginations. Now he nears the maniac, who notices him, turns half round, and throws his arms up in defiance. But on Jourdan goes. Their shadows now mingle on the roof. The wind seems to howl louder, and our eyes less able to distinguish objects.

'Great Heaven! they 're down,' said Brown, squeezing my arm, as something rattled over the roof.

No—it was only a tile.

What are they doing? They are nearer us now—Jourdan walking warily backward, and leading the maniac, whom he has grasped by the breast of his night-shirt. Still are these mad hands held out threateningly over the frail figure guiding him to safety. They reach the trap. Brown and I descend the steps so as to make room for this strange pair. Down they come. We seize the great mad arms, and pin them down, and put the man to bed.

We turn to look for Jourdan; he is quietly pulling on his boots again; and so we all return to the house-surgeon's room. I shall not trouble the reader with any moral reflections, which he may draw, as well as myself, from this little adventure. Poor Jourdan's brave spirit is now, I trust, where he obtains a clearer insight into those great truths he so enthusiastically investigated in his short and useful life. The patient whose life he saved was only suffering from temporary mental excitement, and is now a strong and useful man.

A PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN.

Alexander Cowan, paper-maker, who died in February 1859, at the ripe age of eighty-four, attained the summit of mercantile prosperity, but may be said to have refused to be rich. For his descendants—not much less than a hundred in number—he desired only moderate means, so as to insure their leading useful and industrious lives. In his household, there never was any display, nothing beyond a simple, though abundant hospitality. He said to his daughters: 'I hope, my dears, none of you will ever do anything so miserable as marry rich men.' To insure his keeping down at a certain moderation of circumstances, he gave largely in private charity, and in assisting deserving young men to set up in business; moreover, he twice distributed eight thousand pounds among the charities of Edinburgh. It is believed that for many years there was scarcely so much spent in his own house upon himself and his family as was spent out of it upon others. He had a large and kind heart for the weak and erring. If a person had acted badly, his most severe remark was: 'Well, we must try to improve him; he is a weak creature, and has not had so many advantages as we: do him all the good you can.' If any one sought to injure him in any way, or to misrepresent his motives, he would say: 'Bear with him, and be kind to him; if my character is misrepresented, I do not care, so long as I have the love of my wife and children and a dozen friends.' During about four years at the close of the great war, his mills at Penicuick were used by government as a depôt for French prisoners, and those who died in their confinement were buried on a spot close by, without anything to mark their resting-place. Some years afterwards, having resumed possession of the works, Mr Cowan went to a fellow-parishioner, and extorted five shillings from him, as a subscription towards getting up a monument for the poor Frenchmen. He then raised a really

handsome structure, bearing the following legend: 'The mortal remains of 309 prisoners of war, who died in this neighbourhood between 21st March 1811, and 26th July 1814, are interred near this spot. Grata quies patriæ, sed et omnis terra sepulchrum. Certain *inhabitants* of this parish, desiring to remember that all Men are Brethren, caused this monument to be erected in the year 1830.' A French inscription, composed by a son of Mr Cowan, was added, containing the following passage: 'Nés pour bénir les vœux de vieillissantes mères, par le sort appelés à devenir amants, aimés, époux, et pères, ils sont morts exilés.' Some years later still, the fact of the erection of this monument was made known to the inmates of the Hôtel des Invalides at Paris, some of whom had been imprisoned at Penicuick, and they were all much touched by the *fraternité* which both the act and the language expressed. One sent the following answer to the supposed *parishioners:* 'GENTLEMEN AND LADIES—In reply to the letter of the 21st November last with which you honoured me, I have the honour in the first place to say that I regret that my social position has not afforded me sufficient education to enable me to express the full effect produced on me by your dear letter. All my friends to whom I have communicated it, have shared my surprise and satisfaction; and after having seriously considered the subject in all its importance, we asked ourselves: "Can it be, that while two rival nations were at war (1811–1814), the conqueror collected the mortal remains of the vanquished, that he might await a favourable opportunity for raising a large and handsome sepulchral monument covered with honourable inscriptions?" and after asking one another a second time whether any of us had ever witnessed a similar instance at once of sympathy, of true religion, and fraternity, either in former or in later times, all gave a negative reply. Be it known to you, then, all ye who have contributed to this good work, that France has never failed to hail and to applaud a noble action, come whence it may! And again, be it known to you, that deeply grateful as we are for such a worthy deed, were we not restrained by the fear of wounding your modest feelings, nothing should prevent us from giving this good and lovely action the most extended publicity, by the voice of the journals of the capital. In the absence of this well-merited demonstration, we entreat you to accept our most sincere thanks, and most fervent prayers that Heaven may pour out upon you its richest blessings, and hear our supplications that the time may very speedily arrive when all the nations shall be sisters, and all men brothers, forming but one family—in a word, the family of God! &c. MARCHER and his friends,
Fourth Division, Hôtel des Invalides.
'PARIS, *December* 6, 1846.'

It will not surprise the reader that Mr Cowan took no interest in religious controversies, still less that he had a humble sense of his own merits as a Christian. When some one spoke of his well-spent and beneficent life, near its close, he only remarked: 'When I enter the next world, I believe the first question addressed to me will be: "What have you done for Me in the world that you have left?"'—*Abridged from a Privately Printed Memoir.*

THE TRUE AMAZON.

[The following poem was suggested by an incident connected with the loss of the transport-ship *Europa*. The widow of Colonel Moore, who, in order to insure the safety of the women and children, so heroically met his death, surrounded by his men, in that ill-fated vessel, was said to have gone out as a hospital-nurse to the Crimea, where she died.]

THOU art gone—but not to battle;
Thou hast fallen not by the sword:
Not beneath the cannon's rattle,
Was my hero's blood outpoured.

Forlorn the hope that swayed thee
On the bitter, bitter main;
Yet blessed be God, who laid thee
In His deep, without a stain!

Oh, days for ever parted—
Oh, time with sorrow rife,
They need be lion-hearted
Who wage this war of life!

There are sounding in this heart
Old chords still true to thee:
We are far—yet not apart;
Thou art dead—but not to me.

God's blessing on the brave!
They who scorn a world of beauty;
They who march unto a grave
In the heavenly light of duty!

Thine was the strength undying—
The might that rules the world;
And shall I stand weakly sighing
When its banners are unfurled?

When I hear yon war-array,
I may not see for tears,
O were it but the death-fray,
And I amidst the spears.

I pray the hours speed faster;
I am weary of the sun;
But, O World, thou art my master,
And thy work it must be done!

Not in anguish unavailing
Let me sink, while I can raise
The wounded and the failing
To the hope of other days.

Let me still the widow's weeping—
Let me lift the orphan's head,
A tireless vigil keeping
In memory of my dead.

So, with those who know no morrow,
In my darkness let me stand,
And drown this mighty sorrow
In the tears of all my land.

ELEANORA L. HERVEY.

The present number of the Journal completes the Eleventh Volume; a title-page and index prepared for it may be had of the publishers and their agents.

END OF ELEVENTH VOLUME.

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